

# Desert

WESTERN TRAVEL / ADVENTURE / LIVING

JULY 1968

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**ON DESERT TRAILS** by Randall Henderson, founder and publisher of *Desert Magazine* for 23 years. One of the first good writers to reveal the beauty of the mysterious desert areas. Henderson's experiences, combined with his comments on the desert of yesterday and today, make this a MUST for those who really want to understand the desert. 375 pages, illustrated. Hardcover. \$5.00.

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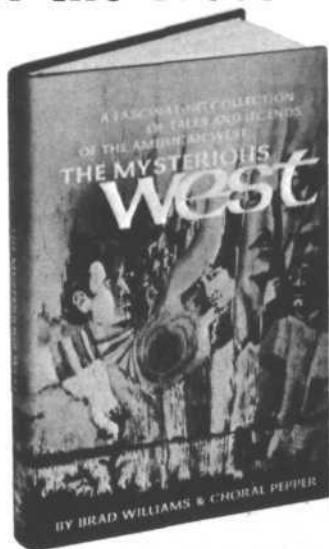
## CONTENTS

- 4 Book Reviews
- 6 We Hunt Sea Shells  
By MARIE VALORE
- 7 Mini Owl  
By LOUISE PRICE BELL
- 8 Modoc Indian Wars  
By ANDREW FLINK
- 10 About Dowsters and Doubters  
By JACK DELANEY
- 12 Lee's Ferry  
By ARNOLD TILDEN
- 15 Bottle Houses  
By ROBERTA M. STARRY
- 18 Carson Hill  
By ROBERT O. BUCK
- 20 Patrick's Point State Park  
By MILO A. BIRD
- 22 Pegleg Nuggets or Peralta Gold?
- 25 Fort Churchill, Nevada  
By JOHN L. ROBIE
- 26 Indians Made Their Own Dyes  
By JERRY LAUDERMILK
- 30 Monsters or ?  
By BEN TRAYWICK
- 32 Spanish Treasure of the Uintahs  
By GALE R. RHOADES
- 35 Woman's View Point
- 36 Lone, Nevada  
By LAMBERT FLORIN
- 38 Back Country Travel
- 42 New Ideas  
By LEE OERTLE
- 43 Letters

### JULY COLOR PHOTOS

Red sandstone cliffs rising above farmlands in the Colorado River Canyon near Moab, Utah are in contrast to the meandering silt-bearing river as shown on this month's cover by David Muench. Back cover, a lonely pine stands as a sentinel above Utah's Bryce Canyon. Photo by Lambert Florin.

# New factual evidence on the legends of the West



By Brad Williams and  
Choral Pepper

This book examines many little-known stories and legends that have emerged from the western region of North America.

Included are such phenomena as the discovery of a Spanish galleon in the middle of the desert; the strange curse that rules over San Miguel Island; the discovery of old Roman artifacts buried near Tucson, Arizona; the unexplained beheading of at least 13 victims in the Nahanni Valley; and many other equally bewildering happenings. Elaborate confidence schemes and fantastically imagined hoaxes are documented, along with new factual evidence that seems to corroborate what were formerly assumed to be tall tales.

Hardcover, illustrated, 192 pages.  
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## BOOK REVIEWS

### SOUTHWEST INDIAN CRAFT ARTS

By Clara Lee Tanner

It has always amazed this reviewer why so few Americans appreciate the crafts and arts of the American Indian. They will spend thousands of dollars purchasing and shipping back to their homes the arts and crafts of the European and Asiatic countries, and ignore the lasting and beautiful works of our own artists.

This is probably due largely to the so-called "trading posts" along the highways through the Southwest. These self-styled "trading posts" are filled with junk, supposedly made by the various Indian tribes, but actually mass-produced elsewhere. The unsuspecting traveler, especially from the east, sees this junk, and, is either told by unscrupulous dealers, or assumes it is the product of our great Indian culture.

This, of course, is not true of all trading posts, and, in many cases, a trading post will have both a combination of junk and authentic arts and crafts. So how are you to tell the difference?

First, understand and appreciate the great contributions the natives of America have made to our imported culture (as contrasted to the phoney television westerns image), and, second, learn to know the different tribes of the Indians of the Southwest, and in what arts and crafts they most excel.

There have been several good books, (and many more bad ones) published on this subject. Undoubtedly, one of the best is *Southwest Indian Craft Arts*. Mrs. Tanner has been a member of the University of Arizona Anthropology Department faculty since 1928 and has studied the Indians of the Southwest for more than 40 years.

She describes in detail changes in style, design, and function due to inter-tribal contacts, Spanish, Mexican and Anglo-American influences or commercialization. She also emphasizes the important role the trader has played in preserving and/or modifying traditional crafts and arts.

Textiles, pottery, jewelry, baskets, sil-

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ver work, kachina dolls, skin craft, carving dolls, blankets—these and many more are described and pictured in 27 full-color plates with more than 140 black and white illustrations and line drawings in the large format (9" x 12") 205-page, high quality slick paper, hard-cover book. It is the first book I have seen that covers all phases of the culture of the Indians of the Southwest. The price is \$15.00. It may seem high for a book, but it is more than a book, it is your introduction to the appreciation of our Indian culture—and it's not junk.

### LOST MINES AND TREASURES OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

By Ruby El Hult

Long-accepted stories about lost mines and treasures of the Pacific Northwest are thoroughly investigated by the author who spent years of research in old newspaper files, travel and interviews with pioneers.

She separates fact from fiction as she writes about the famous Blue Bucket Mine (See Desert Sept. '67), the Mysteries at Nehkahnne, the Lost Cabin Mines, Lost Shepherd Mine and dozens of others. Although factually written, the book makes fascinating reading for both active treasure seekers and armchair explorers. The author states, "I conceived my job as one of reporting; of reporting what treasures are lost, what has been said about them, what clues to their location exist and what luck and adventures others have had in their searches." And she does just that.

Although published in 1964, *Lost Mines and Treasures of The Pacific Northwest* has just been brought to our attention, and since it is of definite interest to Desert readers, we are printing this belated review. Hardcover, illustrated with photographs and maps, 257 pages, \$4.50.



## SUPERSTITION TREASURES

By Travis Marlowe

Hundreds of people have lost their lives while searching for the lost silver and gold mines in Arizona's Superstition Mountains. And thousands of words have been written about the Spanish Peralta family and the Lost Dutchman Mine, which may or may not have been one of the Peralta diggings.

Don Miguel Nemecio Silva de Peralta de la Cordoba and his entire party were massacred by the Apaches in 1847 while attempting to move a fortune in gold by mule train from their diggings to their home in Chihuahua, Mexico. The Apaches took the gold to trade for firearms. Before their ill-fated trip, however, Don Nemecio and his men carved maps on rocks and left still-undeciphered clues as to the location of the 18 mines they had worked—all evidently containing other fortunes in gold.

Today there are no Apaches in the Superstitions, but miners and gold seekers continue to mysteriously disappear. Several bodies have been found, but without their heads. Today the gold of the Superstitions is still sought.

One of the seekers is Travis Marlowe who has spent years looking for the Peralta mines. Although in possession of definitely authentic rock-carved maps, the author has yet to discover the bonanzas. His experiences while searching, and the tragic death of his friend, who found the rock maps, are told in *Superstition Treasures*. Although only 64 pages, the book is impossible to put aside, once you have started reading it. But, be careful, after reading about Marlowe's experiences, you, too, may get the fever and spend the rest of your life looking for the Thundergod's Gold—if you live. Paperback \$2.50.

## A GUIDE BOOK TO THE SOUTHERN SIERRA NEVADA

By Russ Leadabrand

This is the fifth of the author's series of guidebooks to the mountains and deserts of Southern California. Illustrated with good photographs and maps, this volume covers the Sierran region south of the Sequoia National Park, including most of the Sequoia National Forest.

Like his other guidebooks, the author takes you on trips through the areas and brings to life along the way the folklore and history, tall tales and true stories, personalities of the mountain men. He also describes the facilities for travelers who enjoy both scenery and history. Armed with Leadabrand's guidebooks, you will find a much greater appreciation of the areas you visit, plus seeing a great deal more than you would with only a road map. Great for school children who can write reports when school starts again after the summer vacation.

The author's other guidebooks are, *The Mohave Desert*, *The San Gabriel Mountains*, *The San Bernardino Mountains* and *The Sunset Ranges*, the latter covering the San Jacinto and Santa Ana Mountains and the mountains of San Diego County. He also has written *Exploring California Byways*.

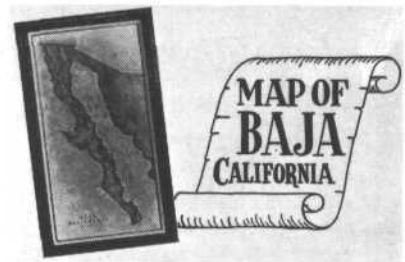
All of his books are approximately 180 pages, illustrated with photographs and maps, good paperback and easy to put in your car dashboard compartment. They are available through the Desert Magazine Book Shop at \$1.95 each.

## LOS ANGELES

### *A Sunset Pictorial*

The editors and photographers of Sunset Books have compiled a pictorial presentation, which, like Los Angeles, is grand in scale, beautiful in depth and moving in space. The result of two years of planning and selecting photographs, the presentation is a tribute to Los Angeles . . . "a place on the move, a place of the future, yet an area with a unique and rich heritage all its own."

In addition to the 304 pages of excellent color and black and white photographs with text, there is a 16-page appendix which is a complete guide including places of interest and a historical chronology of past events. Hardcover, high quality coated paper, large 8½ x 11 format, it is the first complete pictorial coverage of the "largest" city in the world. Advance price through June 30, \$9.95. Starting July 1, \$11.75.



## Adventure Map of Baja California

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OUR family sea shell hunting foray down the Southern California coast to La Jolla turned a one day vacation into a memorable experience. La Jolla is a suburb of San Diego, between the pine-studded cliffs of Torrey Pines and picturesque Mission Bay.

As our station wagon came to a stop overlooking the La Jolla tide pools, we scrambled out and ran across the white sand, the salty breeze whipping against our faces. The tide pools were lower than they had been in several years, exposing a rich variety of marine life not usually seen by the casual observer.

With our four eager children, my husband and I moved cautiously on the slippery rocks, pausing often to explore the pools. The water on the rocks was surprisingly warm to our bare feet. Sections

were covered with velvet green moss, long grass, sharp barnacles and mussel beds. Giant kelp, the ocean's salad bowl, floated from depths of over 100 feet.

nacles. There were horn and turban shells, bubble shells and limpets. One of the high points of our hunting was the discovery of an octopus. The creature, perhaps two feet long, was slithering into a rocky crevice. Its eight sucker-bearing tentacles propelled it along. A young boy attempted to force it out of the crevice but the octopus held fast. We watched until it disappeared. The octopus lives mostly at the bottom of the sea, but during low tides they are sometimes washed onto the rocks.

My husband found a Nut-Brown Cowry shell lying in one of the pools. The oblong cowry, about three inches long, appeared as though nature had rolled it into a fat cigar stub and polished it until it glistened. We were told that fine specimens are becoming difficult to find along the Southern California coast.

sels. Shells were embedded in rock. There were also small shells attached to larger shells. Flower-like sea anemone gathered nearly everywhere we stepped. Tiny shells crusted the outer perimeter of the anemone. When I accidentally stepped on a giant green one, it spit a stream of water at me, then quickly withdrew into itself until it blended with the moss.

One of the children picked up a violet-colored urchin. Its round shell was as spiked as a porcupine's back. Another found a sand dollar that had been cast upon the beach. Its thin, flat surface was covered with soft hair-like spines. We caught a glimpse of a tide pool sculpin. The tiny fish darted silently behind a rock, where it remained until we sat down, motionless, beside the pool. Soon it swam from behind the rock and disappeared among pebbles.

The La Jolla coastline is a virtual marineland of the Pacific. White gulls dip low over the water, then soar skyward toward the beach. The contrast between sheer cliffs and sandy stretches is like a Winslow Homer painting of a seascape, almost too beautiful to be real.

La Jolla is a favorite ground for skin-divers who search the floor of the coast and frequent the musty caves. They dive year round, even in mid-winter, when the water sometimes dips to a chilling 57 degrees.

The Scripps Institute of Oceanography of the University of California is located in La Jolla. The institution is dedicated to the study of sea life encompassing the Pacific Ocean. It is a storehouse of marine knowledge and a leader in the field of research.

The Scripps oceanographic vessel, the Spencer F. Baird, is frequently seen off the coast. It cruises the Pacific on exploratory ventures, studying tides and all things concerning the ocean's depths. An undersea experimental lab, Sealab II, lies off-shore, some 200 feet deep. Various experiments are conducted, many dealing with porpoises.

But to most of us the sea is a captivating mystery. Whatever the time of year, or the reason for visiting, the sea inspires an overwhelming sense of humility. At dusk we reluctantly piled back into the station wagon and headed up the coast highway, vowing to return for another hunting foray among the rocky tide pools of La Jolla. □

# We Hunt Sea Shells

by Marie Valore

we were covered with velvet green moss, long grass, sharp barnacles and mussel beds. Giant kelp, the ocean's salad bowl, floated from depths of over 100 feet.

Kurt, our five-year-old, was fascinated by his first discovery, a purple sea urchin. It lay in a shallow pool, surrounded by open clam and mussel shells. He thrust his small hand into the water and brought it out, examining it closely. When a tiny claw reached out of the shell, he squealed with delight.

We found a great variety of marine life on the rocks, part of the abundant harvest of the sea. There were scallops, abalone, sea snails, chitons, starfish, sea anemone and countless pearl-like shells of odd sizes and shapes. Mingled among the black mussel beds were strange looking goose barnacles and sharp acorn bar-

I held a tiny cone shell in the palm of my hand and watched with awe as a tiny sea urchin emerged. It scurried across my hand and dove back into the safety of the pool.

We moved further out, across slippery grass to a bed of loose pebbles, then to another pool, where we saw a brown sea hare, performing nimble swimming antics among the vegetation in the crystal clear water. The hare, a slug, looks very much like its namesake, the rabbit. A few yards away, water spilled up over the rocks, spraying us lightly with foam. Two seastars were washed up. One was feeding upon a large black mussel.

Goose barnacles, resembling the toes of some prehistoric animal, clung to the sides of rocks and grew among the mus-



# Mini Owl

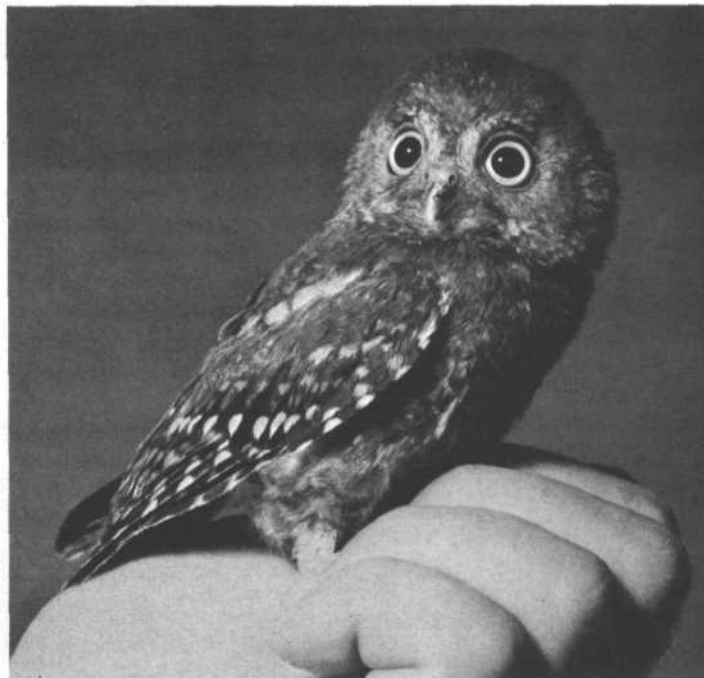
by Louise Price Bell

The Elf Owl is about the size of a sparrow and its tannish feathers are streaked here and there with white. Like all owls, its eyes look tremendously large, particularly since this species is so small. He likes warm weather and is found only in the Southwest; mostly in Arizona, New Mexico and California. And, even though those areas are warm, in the winter he migrates to Mexico which is even warmer.

His diet consists of insects such as moths and beetles, but he also eats scorpions and occasional centipedes, both of which are poisonous. Bird-lovers long wondered how they could eat these poisonous creatures, and even feed them to their young, with no ill effects. After long observations at night, near the owl nests, scientists have discovered somehow the elf owl is able to mangle or completely sever the scorpion's stinger, thus rendering it harmless.

In April the little owls pair off and select their nesting sites, which are abandoned holes in the Giant Cactus, or Saguaro Cactus. Here they are safe from rattlesnakes because the snakes can't crawl up the spiny cactus to the elf owl nest.

These little owls grow quite tame and are a very nice pet. □



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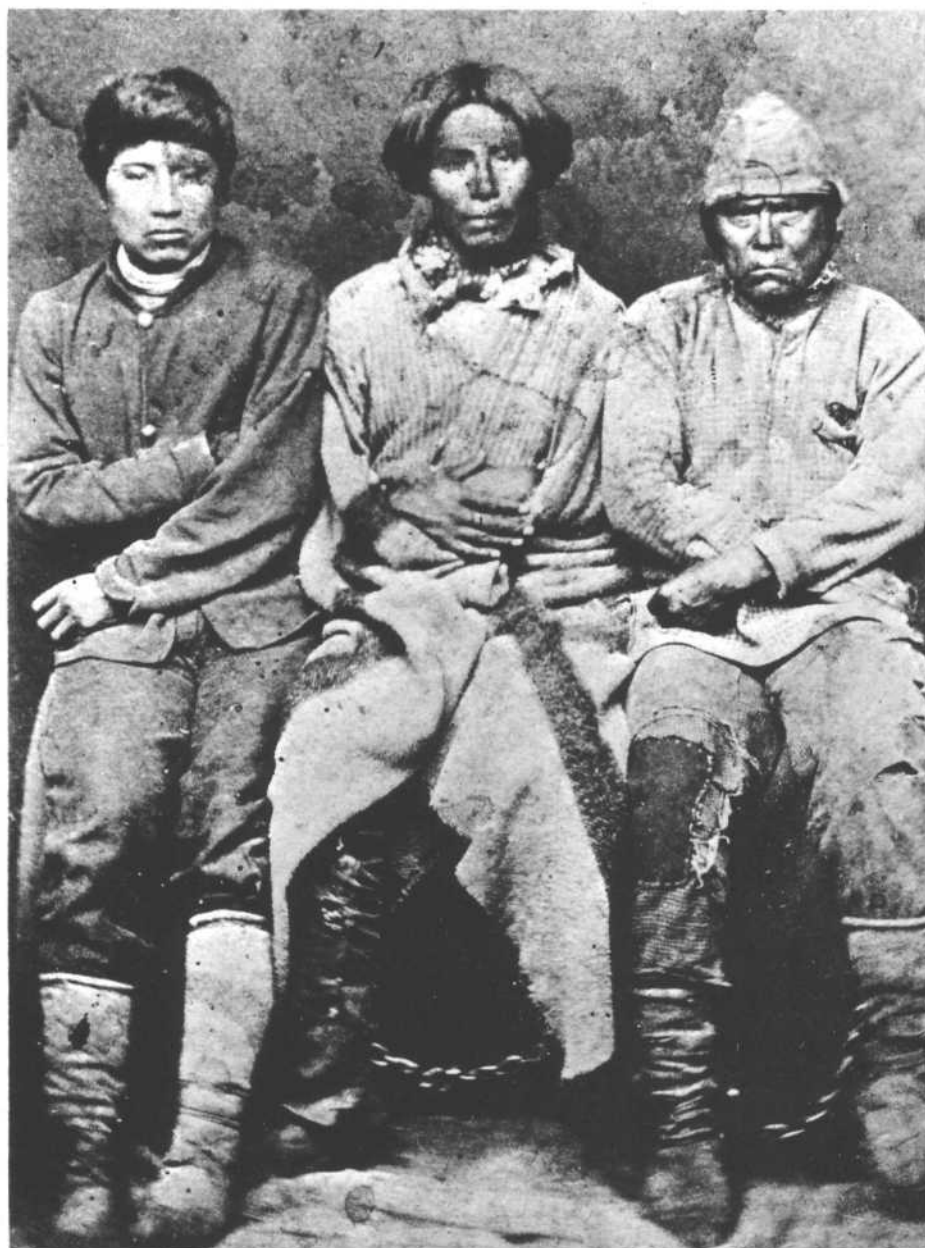
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Today a quiet recreational area,  
California's Lava Beds National Monument  
was the site of the . . .

# Modoc Indian Wars

by Andrew Flink



*Captain Jack, leader of the Modoc renegades (center), and two of his followers glare at the camera shortly after surrendering. Captain Jack was hung for what he felt was a defense of his territory.*



TATE Highway 139 between Alturas, California and the California-Oregon border has well marked roads that will take you directly into

the interesting and natural scenic attractions of the Lava Beds National Monument. Located south of the town of Tule Lake and accessible also by roads leading from the town, the lava beds offer an ancient world of sight-seeing pleasure coupled with the historical significance of the Modoc Indian War.

Located in the Modoc National Forest, the lava beds were set aside by the U.S. Government as a National Monument on November 21, 1925 and the National Park Service took it over in 1933.

The Monument receives its name from the jagged, hardened lava rock you'll see as you drive through the area. Within the 46,000 acres is tangible evidence of the volcanic activity that occurred thousands of years ago. The lava flow came from the eruptions that centered around the vicinity of Medicine Lake. The remains of the volcanic activity are not all on top of the ground, however. Scattered throughout the area are approximately 300 caves brought about by the underground flow. The lava cooled and hardened on the surface but the under-lava kept flowing. Gravity and gas pressure combined to push the lava downward sealing both ends of the tube or cave. Access is gained only when the roof collapses.

The visitor is able to see what's in these caves by using the stairways built by the Park Service. Lanterns are available



at the Monument headquarters but no guided tours are provided. The best time to visit the lava beds is during the months of May through October. Jackets are advisable when exploring the caves since the temperatures drop to a chilly 15 or 20 degrees cooler than the outside temperatures.

Each cave has been named in accordance with its significance. Skull cave is so named because wild animal skulls have been found inside. Water seepage and the naturally low underground temperatures combine to create fantasies in ice that are responsible for the name of the Merrill Ice Cave, which also has an underground river. The first two caves to be discovered received their names when some trappers killed a bear in their camp near a large butte called Bear Paw and the two caves nearby subsequently became known as Little and Big Bear Paw.

In the 1880s, settlers used the area around the butte for picnic grounds and would chip ice from the caves to make their ice cream. Ice tunnels and formations that resemble translucent flowers make Crystal Cave one of the most interesting of the entire system. It has ice pendants that are translucent and several feet high, along with a huge iceberg tunnel big enough to walk through. These caves and many more like them, tell in eloquent terms of the geological history of the area.

Geology isn't the only attraction. A history buff will be fascinated with the location as a war site. Many of the caves have writings on the walls called petroglyphs, or rock carvings. The ancient Indians who inhabited them were probably ancestors of the Modocs who used the caves to escape the U.S. Army during the last stages of the Indian War of 1872 and 1873.

Although the war against the white settlers gained gradual momentum for several years, it wasn't until late in 1872 that United States troops stepped in to stop the rampaging Indians.

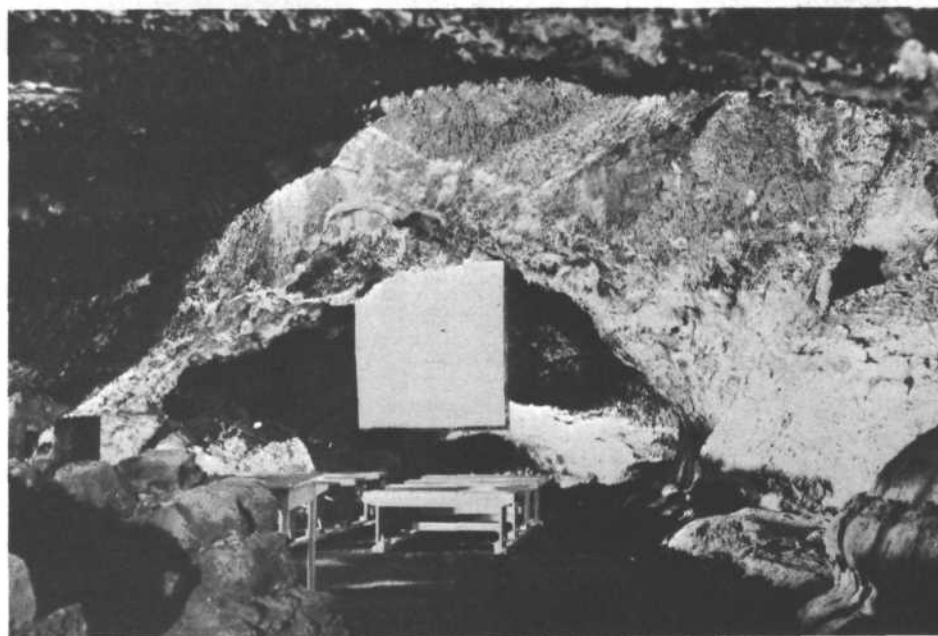
The Modoc War, one of the last to be fought in the west, was also one of the bloodiest. It was fought from a natural fortress of rock known as Captain Jack's Stronghold located in the northern end of the Monument. Because of the unique formation of the rocks, the Modocs were able to hold off over 300 trained troops of the U.S. Army

while they themselves numbered less than 60.

The Modocs were proud and independent. They wanted a reservation on Lost River, north of Tulelake. In 1864, they were persuaded against their wishes to move to a reservation at Fort Klamath, Oregon to be with their home tribe, the Klamaths. The Modocs, though related to the Klamaths, found that they couldn't get along with them and a group led by Captain Jack (Kientpoos) left the reser-

vation for Lost River. There, they found white settlers were occupying the ground Jack felt belonged to the Modocs. The settlers made it plain they weren't going to give it back. A fight broke out and the Indians retreated to the lava beds leaving in their wake some dead settlers. Indifference on the part of the Indian agents to the problems of the Indians contributed to the unrest and by 1872, the Modoc Indian War moved into full

*Continued on Page 35*



*In these rugged lava beds, Captain Jack and his small band of Modoc Indians defied the much stronger United States Army for days before being blasted out by artillery. Lower photo, one of the many interesting caves for visitors to the Lava Beds National Monument.*



# About Dowsters and Doubters

by Jack Delaney



PERSONALLY, I couldn't find our swimming pool with the best dowsing instrument in the world. However, I did locate my bathroom once, with a bent wire clothes hanger! Try it sometime—but not when you're in a hurry. Bent wire clothes hangers can be temperamental at times!

The serious approach to locating underground water is practiced by two opposing groups: the dowsters, who are convinced that their methods are productive of results and have records to prove it; and the scientists, who doubt the ability of the dowsters, even when water gushes up to their briefcases! It might be said that the rest of us fall into two groups also: those who have an interest in both factions and enjoy experimenting with homemade "witch sticks;" and those who care not from where water is ob-

tained—just so it arrives in time for the cocktail hour.

According to scientists, the earth's original supply of water is still in use. Through the years, the same water has moved, by natural action, from the oceans into the clouds, down to earth as rain or snow, and back to the oceans. This is known as the hydrologic cycle. Rainwater and melted snow seep into the ground and continue seeping until stopped by rock layers, then travels horizontally. Since this water cannot be seen, diviners feel that the situation calls for the use of their talents—but the scientists do not agree.

They claim that 97 percent of the world's fresh water supply is underground, and that a hole dug almost anywhere will be productive if the hole is deep enough. These dowster doubters point out that Nature has provided many simple clues that indicate the presence

of water, and eliminate the need for magic forks and rods. A number of plants, such as mesquite, greasewood, palm trees, cottonwood, sycamore, and willow trees, are important indicators of underground water. Also, the surface contour of the land can provide clues.

Perhaps this explains how the Cahuilla Indians, of Southern California, located water many years ago. They were the only Indians known to have dug wells, selecting spots where the water was not over 15 feet below the surface. Chief Francisco Patencio, of the Agua Caliente tribe, in his book, *Stories and Legends of the Palm Springs Indians*, said, "the Indians know that all hot springs everywhere, are joined together under the ground by passage-ways."

If this statement appears to be slightly scientific, the following one, from the same book, is definitely "dowsey!" "The Head Man took his 'staff of power'



which he stuck into the ground. He twisted it around and caused the water of a spring to come out. This is now known as Palm Springs Hot Spring!" An important point to this story is that the Head Man didn't use a dowsing rod, he used his cane, and not only located water, but actually produced it by the twist of a stick! Present day diviners should try this method—it might work.

The U.S. Geological Survey stated, in a recent report on water divining, there are 25,000 active dowsers in the nation, and recorded dowsing incidents date back to Biblical times. However, the report stressed a disbelief in the forked-stick art. Another source, Earl Shannon, who wrote the booklet, *Water Witching*, disagrees with the disbelievers. He claims records show that forks and other types of dowsing rods were used in Germany at a very early date to locate both water and minerals. He infers that the practitioners of the art were quite successful.

Mr. Shannon points out that a number of methods are used to locate water. These include the use of various implements known as witch sticks, dowsing rods, willow forks, pendulums (consisting of small bottles containing mercury, suspended by string from three-foot lengths of wire), and a small black box, with two handles, that lights up when held over water. He states, in most cases, the good dowser uses the regulation forked type divining rod.

After locating water, the dowser usually attempts to determine the depth. Some of the methods used for this chore could be called far out. For instance, Mr. Shannon uses a willow pole about 5 feet long. He holds it by the small end and counts the bobs of the thick end over the spot, each bob representing one foot of depth. Another method, even farther out, is to drop a coin into a glass of water and count the number of oscillations it makes before reaching the bottom. Each oscillation is supposed to equal one foot.

Verne Cameron, Elsinore, California, has written many technical papers and is recognized internationally for his feats in the field of water-locating. During the past 35 years he has located hundreds of wells, including a series on one of the shore islands for the United States Government. He also selected well sites for the Mexican Government, in connection



*Verne Cameron, recognized authority on water locating, holds his Aurameter, featuring coil spring which eliminates any influence by the dowser of wrist action.*

with the building of a railroad across the Sonora Desert. Several small towns in Mexico are enjoying the benefits of this man's unique talent at the present time.

A few years ago, when Lake Elsinore went dry and several proposed solutions to its problem proved to be unsatisfactory, Mr. Cameron pinpointed three spots at the east end of the lake bed as the correct places for locating water. As a result of his recommendations, three of the largest wells ever tested were drilled. They are pumping continuously, each producing more than 5000 gallons of water per minute, and Lake Elsinore is again a beautiful recreation spot.

Whether or not you are a believer, you'll agree that the divining implement used by Mr. Cameron has definite plus points. It is called an Aurameter and features a coil spring that eliminates the possibility of the dowser influencing the rod through wrist action. The Aurameter consists of an aluminum handle with a pivotal mechanism carrying a long wire stem (containing the coil spring) terminated by a heavy pointer that actually floats at the end of the stem. When the dowser's hands are motionless, and the

implement bends in the middle, it is difficult for anyone to remain a disbeliever.

For determination of depth of the water, Mr. Cameron uses a method based on the fact that the reflection of underground water (or oil) comes up strongest in the vertical direction, but also to a 45 degree angle on each side of center. By measuring from the strong midpoint to the area of diminishing impulse, a dimension is established that, through the technique of triangulation, can indicate the depth of the water supply. This method has a definite scientific tinge that might eventually win over the opposing faction.

It should be noted that in all discussions of the subject the gadgets used are sticks, limbs, rods, forks, and a number of impressive mechanisms, but never my favorite—the bent wire clothes hanger. After an initial success with this magic instrument, I boasted to everyone who would listen that I was a witch. In defense of this female term (wizard is the male counterpart), I pointed out that dowsers are water witches—not wicked witches who frighten children; they have never been seen riding around on brooms! □



**EXCOMMUNICATED BY HIS CHURCH,  
HUNTED BY THE UNITED STATES ARMY AND DESTITUTE,  
JOHN DOYLE LEE WAS EVENTUALLY CAPTURED AND HUNG,  
BUT NOT BEFORE HE HELPED COLONIZE  
ARIZONA BY BUILDING AND OPERATING . . .**

# LEE'S FERRY

by Arnold Tilden



FOR a distance of 500 miles, from Moab, Utah, to Hoover Dam, there is only one readily accessible water level crossing on the Colorado River. It was to this spot that the pioneer explorer John D. Lee fled to escape punishment for his part in the Mountain Meadow Massacre in 1857 in which 137 immigrants were massacred by a party of Indians and whites under the leadership of Lee.

Excommunicated by the Mormon Church, hunted by the United States Army, Lee, with one of his wives, eventually sought sanctuary in an isolated canyon in the depths of the Indian country. Here he was to perform his last significant service for his Church and for his fellowmen prior to his capture, trial and execution for murder.

It was in the year of the Declaration of Independence, however, that the first party of white men to visit this area passed through on their return from an unsuccessful attempt to find a short route from Santa Fe to California. Unable to ford the river because of high water, the Spanish Padres, Escalante and Dominguez, climbed the formidable walls of the canyon and continued up the west bank of the river to the difficult but not impossible "Crossing of the Fathers," which is now at the bottom of Lake Powell.

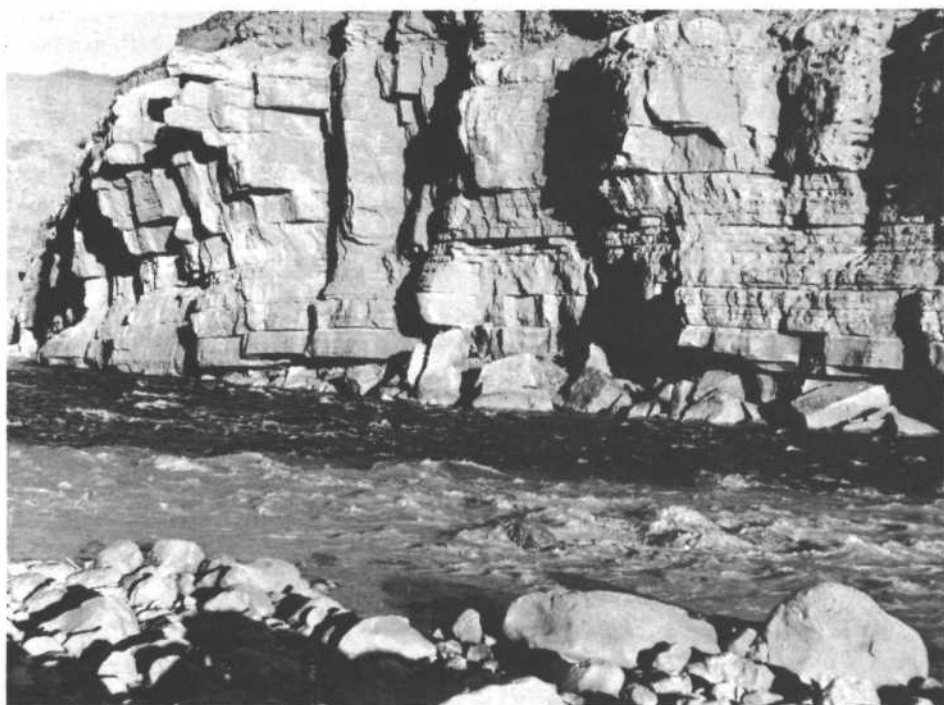
Almost 100 years later, the Mormon missionary to the Hopis, Jacob Hamblin,

used the same crossing on his first six expeditions to the Indian country. In 1869, on his seventh trip, he rediscovered the much more accessible route Escalante had originally found but had been unable to use. In that same year, John Wesley Powell, heading a U. S. Geological Survey team, made his first voyage through the canyons, stopping at the wide flats at the mouth of the Paria River which later were to be the site of Lee's ranch and ferry.

Major Powell repeated his canyon trip in 1871, again utilizing the same wide

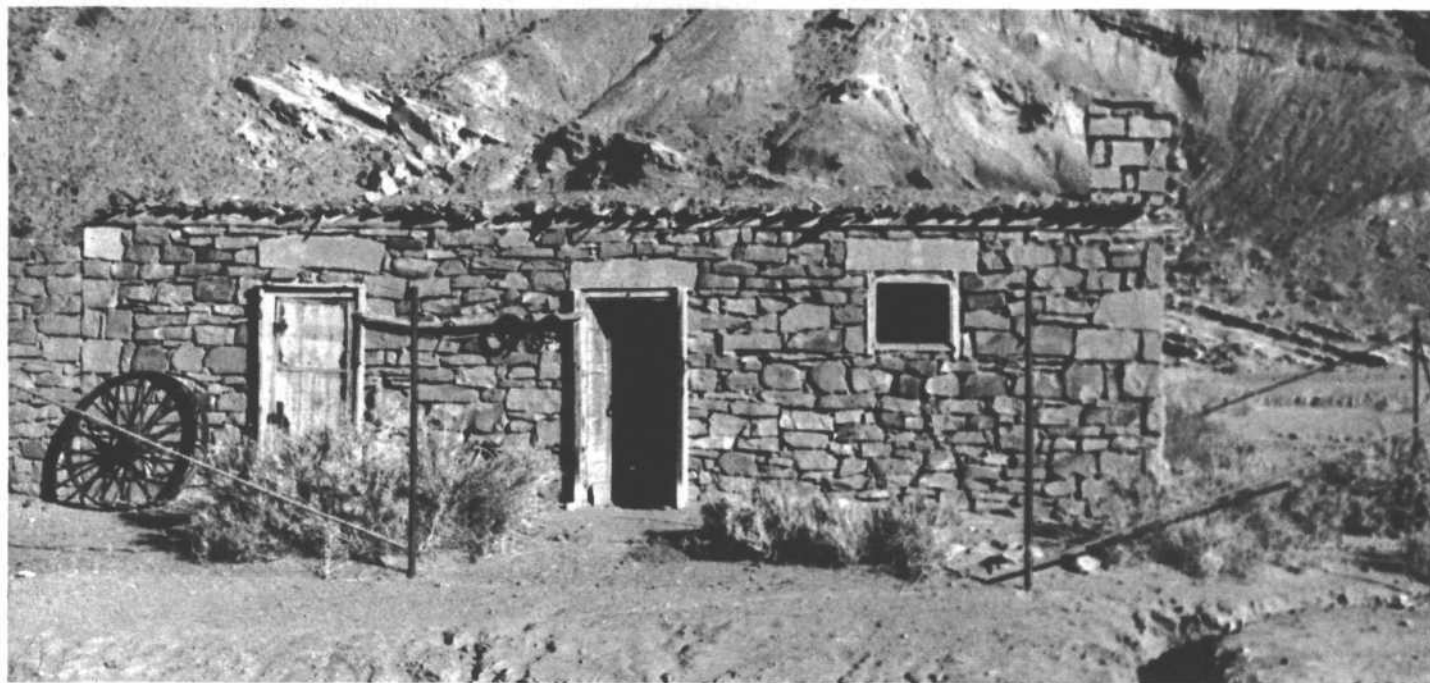
flats as a rest stop and supply depot. Here he abandoned one of his boats, the Nellie Powell, as unsafe. This boat, later salvaged by Lee, became the first commercial ferry, replacing the log raft originally used by Hamblin on his trip to the Hopis.

Lee, accompanied by his wife Emma, reached the area about Christmas time, 1871. Although excommunicated by the Church, he was nevertheless under its orders to build and operate a ferry at this out-of-the-way spot, a ferry that was essential to the direct route from Utah



*The muddy water of the Paria River, foreground, is contrasted with the blue water of the Colorado for several miles below the entrance before they merge.*





*The original fort and trading post built in 1874 is an attraction for visitors to Lee's Ferry.*

to the newly established Mormon colonies in Arizona. Lee was an ideal choice for this assignment. A man accustomed to the mountains and deserts of the West, he was desirous of isolation which might safeguard him from arrest and prosecution. Upon reaching the mouth of Paria, he immediately laid out a ranch, installed a system of irrigation, salvaged Major Powell's abandoned boat, and established the required ferry.

Emma Lee, upon seeing the area for the first time, is reported to have exclaimed, "Oh, what a lonely dell." And "Lonely Dell" it was for many years until Emma, widowed by the capture, trial and execution of her husband on March 23, 1877, transferred the property to the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints. Although "The Lonely Dell" had been the name of the ranch and ferry, travelers referred to it as "Lee's Ferry," a name that became official with the establishment of a post office there in 1879.

For years the Church continued to operate the ferry, but with the coming of rail communications, even though the route was long and indirect, the tortuous overland wagon trail was no longer considered necessary. The Church then sold the property to the Grand Canyon Cattle Company which, some years later, deeded it to Coconino County, Arizona. The County continued to operate the ferry as the only route between the larger more populous southern area of Arizona

and the isolated northland, the so-called Arizona Strip. Ranching, prospecting, mining, and, after World War I, prospecting for oil kept the ferry busy through most of the 1920s.

The end came suddenly and most appropriately. As road usage increased, as communication by wheeled vehicles between southern Arizona and the North

Rim of the Grand Canyon became more necessary, and as State Highways began to replace county roads, the Navajo Bridge, spanning Marble Canyon on top of the plateau about six miles downstream from Lee's Ferry, was authorized. It was anticipated that the new bridge would be completed in 1929. Perhaps the gods of the river were aware of the plans of man

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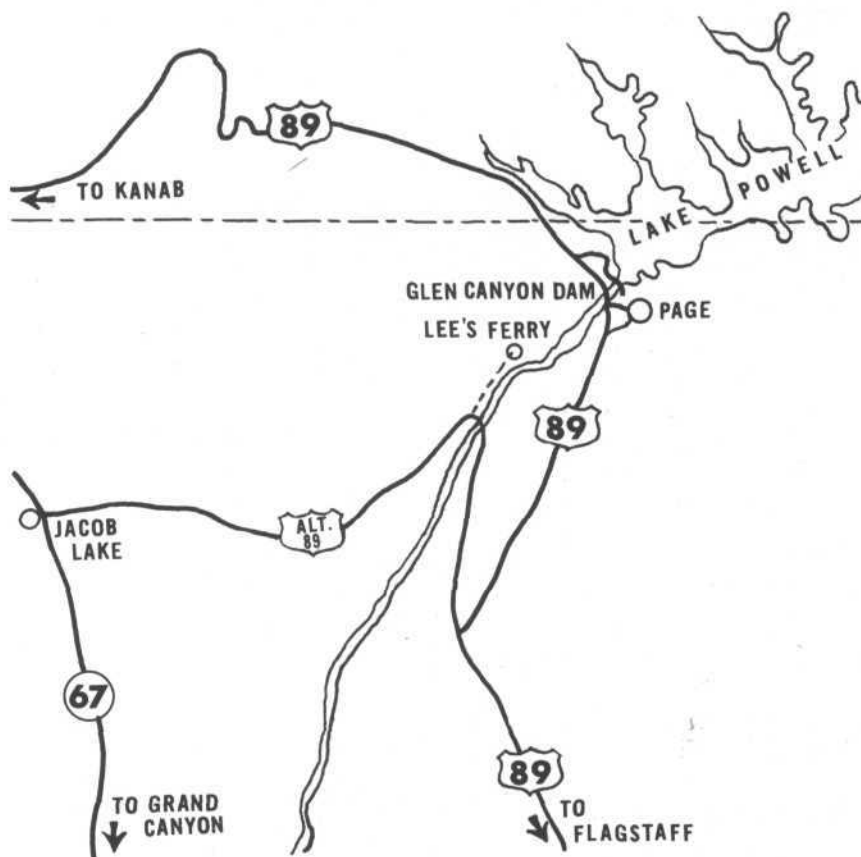


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*While utility, rather than beauty, influenced the selection of the second ferry site, nearly a mile upstream from the original, the utility is gone, beauty remains.*

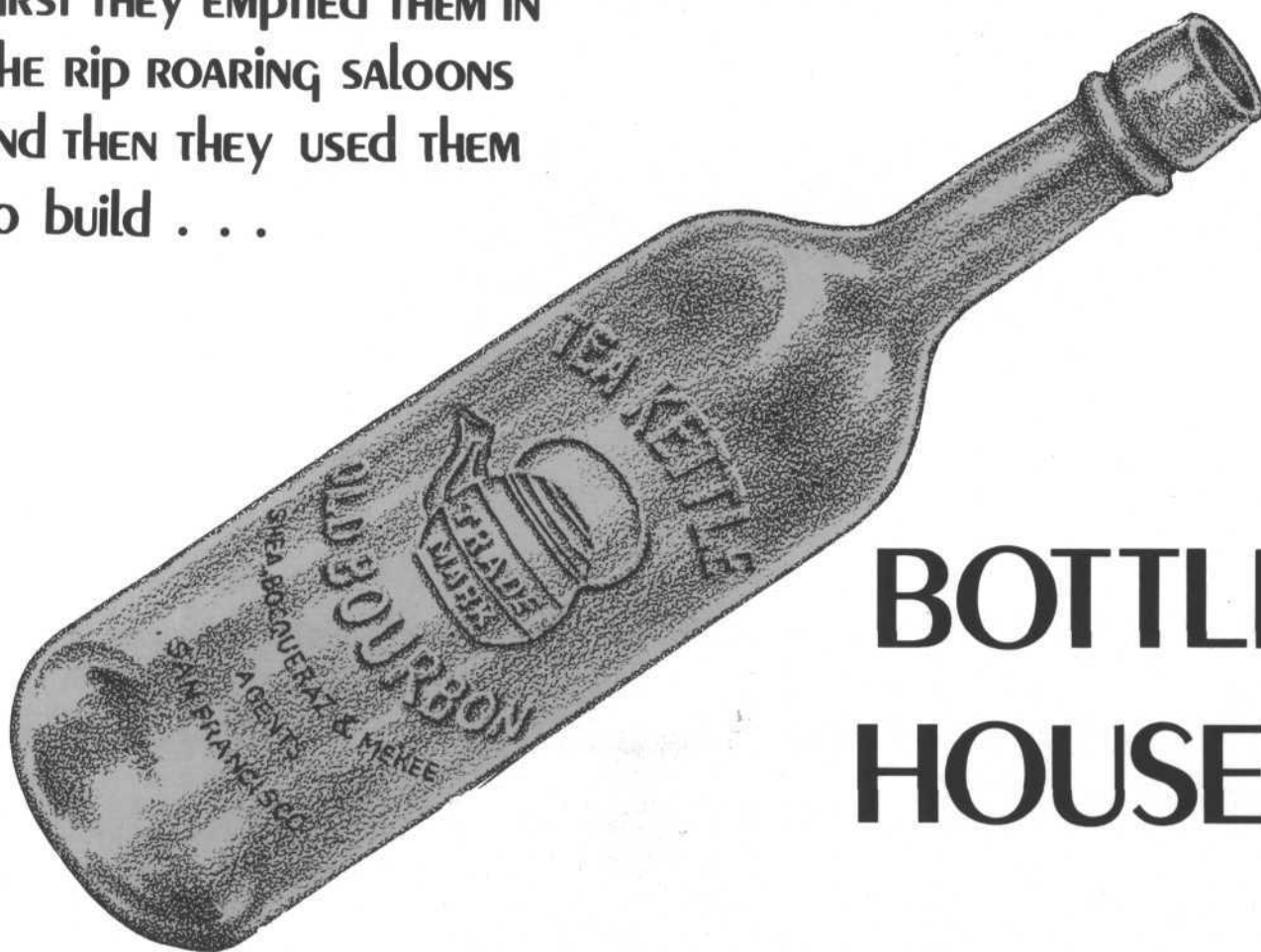
and merely anticipated them by one year. Whatever the reason, 1928 was one of the worst flood years in the history of the river, washing out the cable anchorings and both approaches to the ferry. With the completion of the Navajo Bridge only months away, it was decided not to rebuild the ferry.

And thus a new ghost, remote and removed from the eyes of man, might have been left to haunt the West had it not been that almost at the same time the planned development of the Colorado River began to take form. While Hoover Dam and Lake Mead had little effect upon the northeastern corner of Arizona, the more recent construction of Glen Canyon Dam, and the subsequent development of Glen Canyon Recreational Area, has breathed a new life into the ghost.

What only a year ago was a deserted trading post and an abandoned fort has now awakened to its second century of use by the people of the United States. It might have retained some significance as the point of division between the upper and lower basin states as determined by the Colorado River Compact, but its real significance for the future will be that of an historical monument. Here, in the shadows of the beautiful red sandstone walls of the Echo and Vermillion Cliffs, the relics of the past are being preserved, and facilities for the future are being built. A brand new blacktop road from the north end of the Navajo Bridge to the ferry site has just been completed, and the campground has ramadas, barbecue pits, sanitary facilities with running water, and even an ice machine. Launching ramps for small boats are available, along with a store and filling station for cars and boats.

For those who are only interested in a quick glimpse of sandstone cliffs, it is another beautiful spot where desert, mountains and river all come together. For anyone with an interest in how the West began, it is a hub from which radiated missionaries, traders, gold seekers, and the early transportation enterprises of freighters, steamboats, and projected railroads. Today you can walk along the faint traces of the old road to the water's edge and look across the river to the road on the other side. With but a little imagination, you, too, can be a pioneer, if but for a moment. □

FIRST THEY EMPTIED THEM IN  
THE RIP ROARING SALOONS  
AND THEN THEY USED THEM  
TO BUILD . . .



# BOTTLE HOUSES

by ROBERTA M. STARRY



HERE are countless bottle collectors today but their urge to possess the glass containers does not equal the collectors of 1900 to 1906

in southwestern Nevada. Those pioneer collectors were not concerned with embossed names, mold marks, color or bubbles in the glass; they just wanted bottles, the more the better.

The bottle craze started the winter of 1900 when prospectors rushed to the new silver discovery near a place the Indians called Tonopah, meaning little water. Fortunate were those who came by wagon or packed in a tent, as there were no living accommodations, only wind-swept nothingness. The first lumber freighted in was immediately built into frame work, rough bars and benches for the tent saloons.

The only surplus of anything in Tonopah was the empty bottles dumped behind the tent saloons. An ingenious miner, believed to be J. E. Youngstran, built a house, using over 10,000 beer and whiskey bottles held together with adobe. The glass building material provided colorful lighting during the day hours and the twelve to eighteen-inch walls proved to be good insulation against the extremes of hot and cold.

Tonopah's first bottle house, completed in 1902, stood until 1965, when it was torn down to supply present day collectors demands for old bottles. From early day news items and the memories of old timers, it seems there were other bottle houses in Tonopah, but through the years rooms were added or removed and exteriors changed so that the original buildings are not recognizable.

There are those who believe Tonopah

still has entire buildings or rooms built of bottles, but so covered with cement or stucco that the present occupants are not aware they live in a glass house. One such building is alleged to stand just back of the Tonopah Club. A search for clues to existing bottle houses may draw a blank, but the narrow streets, the boom period houses clinging to steep grades or holding back the once fast growing mine dump, are worth the search.

The back streets of Tonopah have the full flavor of time standing still. The landmarks of the \$150,000,000 bonanza are still there, weathered and silent. Only the main street has bowed to neon lights, modern motels and gas stations. Along the multi-level street, long-skirted women and heavy booted miners have been replaced by girls in mini skirts and men in sandals.

Twenty six miles south of Tonopah





*Still in use today, Goldfield's oldest and probably first bottle house can be seen from the highway. Bottom, bottle house in Silver Peak is opposite post office. Note bottle necks above door.*

another rich deposit was discovered about the time Tonopah's first bottle house was completed. Goldfield sprang into being and housing was also a pressing problem. The rush of miners and boom town followers created a population explosion. Building lots at first were free if a fellow had anything to put on it. Lucky was the miner with a piece of sheet iron for a stove, a strip of canvas for a shelter and a few days supply of bacon and beans. Tents were shared, and a dugout with a wagon-box roof was luxury.

In a very short time building lots cost \$25.00 then jumped to \$350.00 and continued to climb. The first bottle house in Goldfield was built on free land with

empty bottles from beer to champagne. This building survived a flood and the great fire of 1923 when 52 blocks of the town were destroyed. It still stands, near the famed Tex Rickard home, and though it has undergone changes and many coats of stucco and paint, the bottle bottoms are a visible reminder of man and his struggle in early mining camps.

An abandoned adobe just below the Chat and Chew restaurant, going north out of Goldfield, shows a number of liquor bottles used near the roof and sprinkled throughout the walls. The limited use of bottles leaves an impression that the builder may have liked the lighting effect but didn't want to live in a glass house.

A dirt road to the west, between Tonopah and Goldfield, goes around and over a portion of a colorful salt sink and past blue evaporative lakes to Silver Peak, another mining community of the Tonopah-Goldfield period. The road, usually in good condition for all vehicles, is a different story after a heavy rain. Small gullies cut back and forth across the road and at some points the travel up and down is as great as forward progress. In the rain-swept condition one can fully appreciate the story told by an early resident.

In 1906 a miner died and his buddies, fortified by a few drinks, tucked him down in a load of salt for the ride to the undertaker in Goldfield. The road was rough with many ditches to cross and in the jolting motion of the wagon the body worked to the back of the wagon. About half way to Goldfield one of the friends looked back to see how the dead was traveling. With a yell he jumped from the wagon and started to run. The salt had shifted, the body had moved to the back of the wagon and had jolted upright, a sight that would startle the sturdiest miner.

Silver Peak, a ghost town for many years, is coming to life with the Foote Mineral Company and Silver Peak Corporation mining Lithium carbonate. Modern trailers are parked beside old ruins of the community that in three years has grown from 50 to over 200 people. So far the post office and the bar-grocery store are the only businesses in operation. Just across from the post office, near Lazy Way Street, is a bottle house built in the usual manner except for the construction above the door where the open end of the bottles reverse the bottle use.

It was thought bottle bottoms placed to the outside of the wall gave more light and prevented water from running in and freezing. Most of all the necks to the outside would present a multiple organ for the moans and wails of the wind. Silver Peak's bottle house builder licked the water and noise problem by filling the necks with adobe, but defeated the colorful lighting effect.

South of Goldfield toward Beatty and west on State 58, on the east edge of Death Valley, is the ghost town of Rhyolite. Tom Kelly, one of forty some saloon keepers in the booming town, in 1906

saved himself the trouble of hauling 51,000 quart bottles to the dump by building a good-sized house with a steep, gabled roof adorned with jig saw lace. The building, continuously occupied, has stayed in good condition. The exterior walls are not covered with paint or stucco and show the clear beauty of multi-colored bottles, with some turned to lavender by the sun. Most of the house is built of Anheuser Busch, Reno & Co. beers, with Hostetter Stomach Bitters for variety and Gordon Gin used for corners.

Rhyolite became a city of 8000 souls almost over night. Substantial buildings were erected, two railroads competed for business; then suddenly it was all over. Remains of the great buildings stand as reminders of a glorious dream. The depot, bottle house and some restored residences keep the ghosts from completely taking over.

Fifty-seven miles north of Tonopah in the Great Smokey Valley just off State Highway 8A is Round Mountain. A different bottle structure can be seen in the yard of Lillian Berg. Bottles form both ends of a cave from the ground to peak of the roof, providing light to that portion of the cave below ground level. Though Round Mountain had a gold strike in 1906 the bottle cave was not

built until 1914. The town had a two room bottle house at one time but it was torn down to be replaced by a more modern building.

Round Mountain, an interesting community on the north edge of a symmetrical hill of silicified rhyolite, developed when Nevada's first extensive placer field was discovered. With all the boom atmosphere of Tonopah and Goldfield going on at the time, Round Mountain's gold didn't create a rush though it did produce \$7,850,000 in gold up to the time the government closed the mines during World War II. Mines are now being reactivated, but like most mining communities in the southwest, the operators wait for a price that will make mining again possible.

At an altitude of 6200 feet, the temperature is comfortable year around. Gardens and fruit trees flourish. Unlike most other mining towns, the residents have kept their homes painted, and flowers grow in front. Distant mine dumps, a few ruins, a big old fire bell and a cave topped with bottle walls remind the visitor Round Mountain was part of the 1900-1906 newly discovered mineral wealth of Nevada, when bottles were collected for building—but only after the builders had emptied them. □



*The famed bottle house in Rhyolite as it looked when completed in 1905, a 51,000 bottle monument to a once roaring mining town.*



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# The Mother Lode's CARSON HILL

by Robert O. Buck



PERHAPS no single spot has contributed more to the vaults at Fort Knox than that precipitous, mine-scarred promontory on the

Mother Lode in Calaveras County, California known as Carson Hill.

When James H. Carson (no relation to the famous trail blazer, Kit Carson) stood on top of this escarpment in the spring of 1849 he did not know he was standing on top of one of the richest gold deposits the world has ever known. Little did he dream that from mines such as the Morgan, Melones, South Carolina, Union, Santa Clara, Iron Mountain, Finnegan and Irvine would come a golden hoard rivaling the fabled treasures of King Midas. He would never know the ground under his feet would produce in excess of \$26,000,000.

While Carson's sojourn in this area was brief, it is fitting that it should bear his name, for it was he who blazed the trail to this area in August of 1848. Recently discharged from Colonel Jonathan Stevenson's famous 7th regiment of New York Volunteers, he was one of the first to hear of Marshall's discovery of the yellow metal at Sutter's Mill, near Coloma, late in January of the previous winter. He joined a small group which ventured farther up the American River.

Carson and a few others drifted off a little to the south, where they camped by the side of a trickling mountain brook. This was Weber's Creek, having been discovered by Captain Weber, the founder of Stockton, who had been there in March of that year.

James Carson was a restless sort and results of his few days of mining the gravels of the creek were disappointing. He had averaged less than three ounces a day. Carson and another miner, George Angel, formed a group to explore the little known Sierra Nevada foothill region of California.

Among the group were John and Dan Murphy. John Murphy had been, in addition to mining, running a trading post in partnership with Captain Weber. John was Weber's brother-in-law, Weber having married John's younger sister, Ellen. John had been a lieutenant under Captain Weber in the Mexican War. They left Weber's Creek on a summer day in 1848 for a prospecting excursion of the region since named the California Mother Lode.

The first day they reached the Consumnes River. Here they made camp and tried their luck in the gravels of the stream bed. The results were good, but the region farther south still beckoned. So they moved on to Sutter Creek. Here prospects were very good and a few days were spent before packing up and moving on to the Mokelumne River, prospecting every stream they crossed.

After spending a few days panning on the Calaveras River, they reached a clear running, small, as yet unnamed creek in August of 1848. Gold was plentiful, with the group panning as much as ten ounces per man in a single day. Here, at what was later named Angels Camp, on Angels Creek, the party broke up. George Angel, and the few members of the party who elected to stay with him, mined the rich placers in the creek.

When word got out of the rich placers in Angel's Creek, miners flocked to the area. By early spring of the following year (1849) the population of the camp was 300, exclusive of Indians.

With the influx of miners, George thought it more profitable to run a trading post, so he set up a store, freighting in supplies from Sacramento and Stockton by pack animals and later by wagon. Jim Carson moved on about four miles from Angel's Camp to a stream later named Carson's Creek. Here the richness of the deposits of gold nuggets was more to Jim's liking. His group mined for ten days, with each man averaging 180 ounces of gold.

With the coming of spring of 1849, Jim Carson returned to his diggings on Carson Creek where he resumed mining. Early in 1850 he abandoned his diggings in the creek, exploring the length of the great San Joaquin Valley. At some point in his wanderings, he took time to write his small book, *"Recollections of the Early Mines."* This was published in Stockton in 1852.

With the coming of statehood, James Carson was elected to the State Legislature from Calaveras County in 1852. He fell ill shortly after, and died near Emory's Ferry in January, 1853.

In October of 1850, William Hance was looking for a stray mule. On the hill above Carson's abandoned diggings in the creek he saw an outcropping of white quartz. Knocking off a chunk, he found it contained 14 ounces of gold. He had found the Mother Lode.

Hance sold the claim to the Carson



Creek Consolidated Mining Co., which consisted of Hance, J. Anstill, J. B. Smith, William Rowe, D. Murphy, James Nott and A. Morgan. It was commonly called the Morgan Company.

From this claim (the Morgan Mine) \$2,000,000 was taken out in less than two years. One single blast brought down ore worth \$110,000 in gold. It is said the quartz was so rich that much of the gold was taken from the rock by hand, pounding it in mortars. In many cases the gold was in bands and stringers so thick it was necessary to cut it out with hammers and chisels.

On this same hill, a man by the name of Comstock, shot and wounded a rabbit. While crawling under the thick brush in search of the rabbit, he found a quartz vein laced with stringers of gold. He became a millionaire overnight. From this claim came the largest single mass of gold ever discovered in California. Known as the Calaveras nugget, it contained 2,340 troy ounces, valued at \$43,534.

There were many other similar rich concentrations and pockets of gold discovered on Carson's Hill until 1941 when all gold mining was brought to a halt. Much underground wealth still awaits the miner's pick in the depths of this hill on which James Carson stood that spring day in 1849.

Traveling south from Angels Camp on the Mother Lode Highway (Star Route 49) you can see the giant glory hole in Carson's Hill. The area is rich in history and is perfect for either a weekend or summer vacation. □

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# Patrick's Point State Park

by Milo A. Bird



N Trinity Sunday, June 9, 1775, two Spanish explorers, Bodega and Heceta, entered a small cove now known as Trinidad Bay some 18 miles north of the present city of Eureka, California and erected a roughly hewn cross bearing the inscription, "Carolus III Dei G Hyspaniarum Rex."

It is possible that Rodriguez Cermano may have sighted the Trinity headland on November 4, 1595 but there isn't any record showing that he landed. Neither are there any records of other white explorers going ashore there between Heceta's landing and that of Captain George Vancouver who landed in April 1793 and found the hewn cross left by the two Spanish explorers.

At that time the Yurok Indians claimed all the shore line from Klamath River in the north to Little River in the south and extending about thirty miles inland. Although these Indians were friendly, whites did not try to settle until about 1851 when gold was discovered in black sand on the beach at Gold Bluffs, 15 miles south of the mouth of the Klamath River. When gold played out and attempts at homesteading and farming were unsuccessful, all but a few hardy whites deserted the area.

Patrick's Point State Park, lying a few miles north of Trinidad and a few miles south of Gold Bluffs, is a small portion of the Yurok territory. Conservation minded citizens, the Save-the-Redwoods League and the United States Government began to negotiate for its acqui-

sition in 1930. The park was named for Patrick Beegan whose preemptive claim is recorded in the Trinidad Record Book of 1851 and whose tract six miles north of Trinidad was known as Patrick's Ranch.

Although there are times when Patrick's Point is fog-bound and wind-whipped, the park is always beautiful. In its 425 acres there are 122 camping spots, 42 picnic units, a group camping area with communal kitchens, a museum, hiking trails and a rain forest. The Japanese current warms it in winter and cools it in summer. The entire area is a paradise for nature lovers, hikers, driftwood buffs, rockhounds and shutterbugs.

Trails have been cut through much of the wildest portions of the park to accommodate hikers and nature lovers.

And to keep it wild and beautiful the way nature developed it no limb, twig, flower or piece of dead wood may be disturbed. Only the occasional roar of a truck engine or the soft purr of a speeding car on Highway 101 breaks the illusion that one is in the deepest primeval forest.

Along the trails ceanothus, manzanita, azalea, rhododendrons and numerous types of berries grow in a tangle of luxuriant profusion. Tiger lilies, paint brush, wild iris, lupine, poppy, oxalis, fireweed and many other wild flowers bloom.

Near evening if a person sits quietly on the edge of a clearing, he may see a doe and her fawn gingerly stepping from a tangle of brush aiming for the luscious grass just ahead. And even though he does not see deer he cannot be deaf to the musical chirping of dozens of chickadees and wren tits as they bounce jauntily from twig to twig in search of food. Neither can he ignore the saucy screams of blue jays, the melodious songs of warblers, or the soft whistle of hawks stalking prey. Although bear and elk have been seen their appearances are few and far between.

Chinquapin, cascara and willow form almost impenetrable barriers between tall trees including Douglas fir, hemlock and coast redwoods. Bishop pine, beech and red alder grow close to the shore line while Port Orford cedars are interspersed throughout the park.

The meadow, which contains the camping and picnic spots, is 165 feet above sea level. It contains several rocky outcroppings which the Yuroks considered were hallowed ground, the last resting place of immortals on earth. Ceremonial Rock, the highest of these outcroppings is 110 feet high, thereby affording anyone at its top an excellent view of the coast from Klamath to Cape Mendocino.

Six well defined trails lead from the meadow to the shore line. The most southerly leads to Palmer's Point while others lead to Abalone Point, Rocky Point, Patrick's Point, Mussel Rock and to Agate Beach. To a person standing at the top of the trail to Agate Beach the sandy shore at its bottom seems to be 500 feet below, but if he looks up from below he'll swear it's a thousand feet to the top.

Running north from the bottom of the



*Driftwood on Agate Beach, looking toward Patrick's Point.*

trail the beach leads to Big Lagoon roughly two miles away. Driftwood of every imaginable shape has been piled back against the cliff for nearly half of that distance. Once, when I visited Agate Beach, driftwood in one area was fully one hundred feet wide, several feet thick and a quarter of a mile long.

Between the driftwood and the surf, campers, picnickers and rockhounds search for agates, for which the beach was named, and for chloromelanite, a first cousin of jadeite. In fact, it would be jadeite if it did not contain iron. Besides chloromelanite an occasional piece of nephrite jade shows up.

Geologists theorize that many years ago a river flowed through the mountains east of Patrick's Point and emptied

into the ocean near the present Big Lagoon. Somewhere along its course the river picked up chloromelanite and nephrite and deposited them in what are now huge sandy cliffs bordering the surf. No matter how many of these stones are picked up by rockhounds the next tide uncovers more.

There are flowers everywhere. Once I located a veritable wild flower garden growing in the sand above the farthest reaches of the waves. Sand peas, wild strawberries, lupines and a flower resembling morning glories all grew together in a beautiful carpet of color.

Whether it's photographing flowers, collecting driftwood, rockhounding or just relaxing, Patrick's Point State Park offers a full fare for the entire family. □

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# PEGLEG NUGGETS OR PERALTA GOLD?

Of the hundreds of lost bonanza stories of the West, one of the best known and most controversial is that of Pegleg Smith's Black Gold. Thomas Smith, a trapper who lost his leg in an Indian fight, found black gold nuggets around 1829 when lost in a sandstorm en route from Yuma to Los Angeles. He did not know the "black pebbles" were gold until later. Despite repeated attempts, he failed to relocate his lost bonanza. For more than 100 years the search for the nuggets has continued. In March, 1965 an anonymous writer sent an article to DESERT stating he had, during the past 10 years, collected \$314,650 in black gold nuggets in an area "within 30 miles of the Salton Sea." Since then he has written seven letters, each one accompanied by a nugget, all of which are on display at DESERT Magazine in Palm Desert. His latest letter, received just before our deadline, answers many questions by readers in recent issues. Below photo was sent by him to show how the black nuggets appear as he found one.



It is time I brought you up to date: As always, I am enclosing another black nugget. I have tried, in the past, to send at

least one each of the various types of nuggets I found. Some that I cleaned, treated and tumbled in various ways, and others naturally black as found, including some found on the surface and some underground that weren't quite so black. The idea being to send DESERT a variety of the black nuggets. This one was found on the surface and the black coating is rougher and scabbier than the average. Under a magnifying glass it seems to have a thick crust of oxidation. I've washed all the dirt out with water and detergent.

Going back to the November '67 issue and Mr. Bean's letter: he makes



several matter-of-fact statements which he obviously takes for granted. While I appreciate his sincere interest, let me make these observations: One, there are many water-worn rocks in the desert and, unless Mr. Bean actually found black nuggets, he is only as-

suming that the water-worn rocks he found is "a little over a mile from where you found the black nuggets." Two, frankly I can't remember whether the rock rings were completely closed or had small openings. My best recollection is that they were closed, in the sense that rocks had been laid next to each other to form the rings, and while there may have been a few inches between rocks, I don't remember seeing any kind of opening wide enough for, say, a man to walk into the ring without stepping over the rocks. As to the distance from the rings to the discovery site, I never attempted to connect the two and made no effort to measure the distance, particularly since the rings were some distance from the nuggets. Three, if Mr. Bean really knows where I parked my jeep and what direction I took, then he obviously has found the cor-

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rect area (somebody has—more about this later) but as to his knowing where Pegleg was found dying—I wasn't aware that Pegleg was found dying at the location of the black nuggets. Also, maybe it was Mr. Bean's tracks and camp signs I found, but he can only assume this. At this point in his letter, Mr. Bean sort of goes astray. I said I found an old corroded buckle similar to illustrations I later saw of early Spanish buckles. However, what I found was not a belt buckle, but looked more like something used on saddle equipment, and of course has no connection with Thomas Smith. Also, why anyone would want to leave a belt buckle as a claim marker is rather obscure.

This answer to Mr. Bean's letter is not intended to belittle him in any way as he is obviously and sincerely interested in the location of the black nuggets. He has, I believe, located the general area, and his letter is very cleverly written with the aim of getting more detailed clues. I've already given another good clue. I wonder if he can figure it out. In answer to his letter in the May 1968 issue, I *have* been checking recently. (More later.)

There is little I can add or say about Mr. Walls' and Mr. Harris' authentication of the sword-sheath "throat" in the January and February 1968 issues. The letters speak for themselves. It is clear that the artifact was contemporary with the Peralta caravan.

To Choral Pepper, February issue: Your letter is one more good piece of information that ties the black Pegleg nuggets to the Peralta caravan.

To William Deane, February issue: You are right, I never at any time made mention of "water-worn rocks a little over a mile" from where I found the black nuggets. See my answer to Mr. Bean above.

To Mary Dunn: With your ability you shouldn't worry about things like black nuggets and sword hilts when you could make millions getting the true history of mankind since the beginning of time. Why, you could get a fingernail paring of General DeGaulle and dream over it and find out that he is the reincarnation of Joan of Arc. I'm sure he would reward you handsomely!

Now, up to date: *Somebody* has found the exact location of the discovery site, whether they know it or not. I found tracks there and two places where somebody had dug holes but didn't fill them up. Everytime I found a black nugget with a metal detector and dug it up, I was extremely careful to fill the hole up and leave the surface looking as undisturbed as possible. Whether the party found black nuggets or not I do not know—it certainly is easy to get false indications on any detector as any experienced operator will confirm. Also, I've said many times that I went over the discovery area many times inch by inch with the best detector available and even laid out grids with string to make sure I covered the area completely. Nevertheless, somebody has dug two holes there and certainly could have found nuggets I missed. If they did I suspect you will hear from them. Anyway, if they will show their evidence in the form of the distinctive black nuggets, this will confirm it.

I will make this final observation: If the black nuggets are native to the area—which is the original theory I advanced — and it is still perfectly valid, then I think other deposits will turn up as I've described previously. If the Peralta caravan theory is correct, then, of course, the nuggets would be confined to the area where they were lost or whatever it was that caused them to be left there and, in which event, I've recovered the whole shipment, or at least all but the nuggets that are too small or too deep to be detected. Well, the two holes have got me wondering if I missed a few.

Sincerely,

THE MAN WHO FOUND  
PEGLEG-PERALTA BLACK GOLD

P.S. To Mr. J. A. Lentz: You are an extremely logical fellow! ☐

Nine back issues containing the original article, subsequent letters and other stories pertaining to the Pegleg mystery are available. The issues are March '65, April '65, May '65, July '65, Aug. '65, Dec. '65, June 66, Aug. '66, Dec. '67. For all nine issues send a \$4.00 check or money order to Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260. Individual copies are 50 cents each.



# Fort Churchill, Nevada

by John L. Robie



*The early morning sun still shines on Fort Churchill. From left to right, hospital, laundry, quartermaster's store and U. S. Army headquarters.*

The crumbling adobe walls of old Fort Churchill remind us of the hectic activity and violence which caused the establishment of this army post on the big bend of Nevada's Carson River on the 13th of July, 1860.

Troubles between the white settlers and Paiute Indians erupted into open war when Williams Station was burned and five whitemen were killed in retaliation for stealing and misusing Indian squaws. One hundred and five settlers from Carson City, Gold Hill, and Virginia City rode to Pyramid Lake to stop the uprising. They suffered defeat and massacre. Major William J. Ormsby was among those who fell.

Named in honor of the Inspector General of the United States Army, General Sylvester Churchill, the fort was built

to be a permanent post. The buildings were constructed of adobe set on rock foundations. Barracks were erected along the west side of a quadrangle: post headquarters, quartermaster's store, and laundry were on the east; two-story officers quarters formed the north side; and along the south were the guardhouse, bakery, stables and corrals.

During the Civil War it was an important outpost and main supply depot for the Nevada Military District. The mail and stage routes were patrolled by men from the Fort, and the Pony Express used it as a way station. It was closed in 1870.

Today Fort Churchill is a Nevada State Park. A delightful campground and picnic area has been built alongside the Carson River. It is a peaceful recreation site that is enjoyed by many visitors. □

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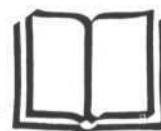
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*Canaigre or wild rhubarb, a kind of dock is native to Arizona. The roots make an orange-yellow dye for cotton and wool, red on leather.*



*Krameria or "ratany," a treacherous and thorny bush whose roots made a yellow dye for the Papagos. Wild in many parts of southern Arizona.*



*Elderberry plant, common in many places was used by Indians of southern California to make a fast black for basket splints.*

# Indians Made Their Own Dyes

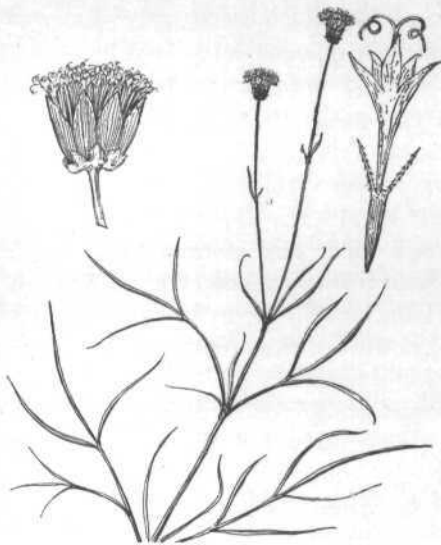
**by Jerry Laudermilk**

Illustrated by HELEN LAUDERMILK

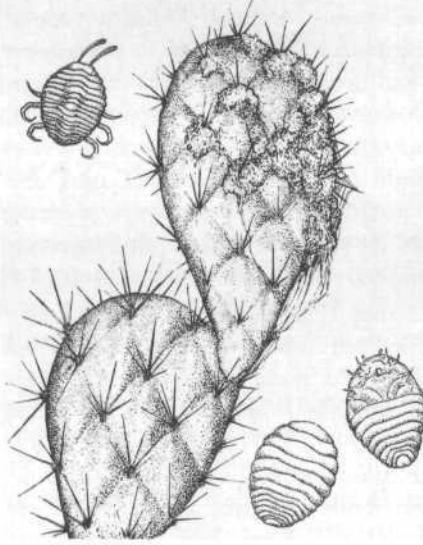
Although Indians still make their own blankets they now use prepared dyes. The older tribesmen colored their wool with dyes which they brewed themselves from the shrubs they found on the desert, and from rock pigments.

Today, this is a lost art, just as the hand painting and weaving of Indian rugs may be in a few years.

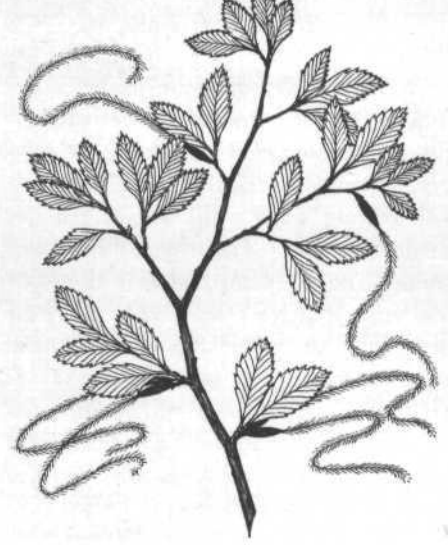
Since we have received quite a few inquiries recently about how to make natural dyes (maybe the white man is returning to nature and will continue what may be a lost art) we are reprinting this article by Jerry Laudermilk from the now out-of-print March 1945 issue of Desert Magazine.



*Ho-bo-it-si. A cousin to the coreopsis. The flowers make an orange-red basket dye used by the Hopi.*



*The wild cochineal insect furnished shades of red. A young bug is shown at upper left; two mature females are shown at lower right. Tufts of cotton on the cactus pad are tents of the insect.*



*Mountain mahogany. The bark, rich in a peculiar dyestuff makes interesting shades of red on wool and cotton.*



HE "big room" of the ranch house at the LK Bar, near Wickenburg, Arizona, had three doors. There was the old north door, sinister and forbidding for no obvious reason and never used. Some doors are like that. Then there was the south door just about the right means of egress if you had to go to Phoenix to see a lawyer. Then there was *the* door. This was simply the entrance to the big room from the kitchen, a door to invite loitering and conversation. Its entire personality was friendly and unsophisticated. It was several days before I realized that this feeling of good will radiated from a well-worn Navajo blanket that served as a rug in the doorway.

This blanket was obviously a veteran. Certain frayed creases told of service as a saddle blanket. Three burnt holes spoke of campfires, and two darned places reflected credit upon unknown owners. It had been five years in its present place. A little threadbare and trampled pretty smooth, the colors were still there, creamy white, grey, brown, black and a strangely interesting reddish cinnamon that fitted the scheme as perfectly as the orange spots fit the pattern on a Gila monster. But how did the Indian weaver get such pleasing colors that defied time and heedless boots?

From my aunt I learned that some of

these colors were the natural colored wool of the Navajo sheep. But the black and red were artificial. Black was said to be made from the leaves of a certain bush and a mineral the Navajo found in their own territory, and the red came from boiling two different kinds of bark. My aunt ran short of information at this point but could contribute a few items of her own about natural dyes. One plant she showed me was a kind of dock, canaigre (*Rumex hymenosepalus*), source of a reddish dye for leather and an orange-yellow on wool or cotton. The other plant was rabbit brush, *Chrysothamnus nauseosus*, whose blossoms furnished a brilliant yellow on yarn or cloth.

The question of Indian dye making has intrigued students of American ethnology for a long time and much has been published in official reports, but in some cases the information is unsatisfactory.

The origin of black dye is unknown but some of the Cliff-dwellers and Basket-makers were acquainted with a fast black, perhaps this same dye prepared by a formula now lost. They also had a fast red. After hundreds of years cotton textiles from the debris of long-abandoned cliff houses near Kayenta in north-eastern Arizona still show strong color. These ancient dyers were no mere dabblers in their art since they understood the importance of certain chemical assistants to good dyeing called *mordants*

which serve to fix the color fast to the fiber. The theory as to how mordants work is highly technical but briefly it can be described as a kind of "go-between" action where some chemical which "likes" both the dye and the fiber carries along the coloring material when it fastens itself upon the yarn. Other mordants work by putting the fibers in a chemically friendly mood toward the dye so that the latter will stay fast after it once colors the yarn. So much for the black in my aunt's blanket. The red was a different subject entirely.

In old times the Indians found it difficult to obtain a good red. With the exception of the Pimas who had the means for making true reds and pinks which I will describe later, the best they could produce were low-toned shades of reddish brown, pinkish tans and dusky orange. These are the reds found in the oldest textiles. Of course, before Spanish times there was no wool except a little from mountain sheep killed in the hunt. The only yarns of animal origin were made from the hair of rabbits, dogs, badgers, etc., and from feathers. These were twisted into string with yucca fiber and cotton. With the arrival of sheep and plenty of wool there still was the difficulty about a true and brilliant red of scarlet or crimson shade. Later they met this need by unraveling yarns from a type of Mexican red flannel called bayeta and re-weaving it in



their fabrics along with yarns of native dye.

The best early reds were made by extracting the bark of alder (*Alnus obongifolia*) and mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus* and *C. breviflorus*) with boiling water until a dark red decoction resulted. The liquid then was strained and the yarns boiled in the solution until the dye "took." The mordant used for this color was fine juniper ashes. According to one source the secret of a fine permanent red of the henna order was to add a certain rather rare lichen (*Parmelia mollinuscule*) to the dye bath. In my experiments I tried several different lichens since the one prescribed was not available. My best results were with a common species (*Parmelia conspersa*). The resulting color was, appropriately enough, found to be called Apache Brown in the color dictionary. Mountain mahogany bark alone makes a reddish shade called Castilian or Old Cedar. The smooth slate colored quills of dry bark are hardly what you'd expect to use for a red dye, but once in boiling water a subtle chemical begins and the bath grows redder and redder until finally it becomes almost black. This gives a full, rich color on wool but paler and pinker on cotton. To avoid disappointment with this dye it is essential to use clean water and dye-pots and freshly washed yarn. The dyeing operation can be carried out properly only in pots free from iron. The merest trace of iron dulls the color by making it smoky.

The red dye of the Pimas was carmine from the wild cochineal insect of southern Arizona and California. Apparently this dye was used only for decorating woodwork, especially war arrows. Colonies of the cochineal bug make their homes in tufts of white, cottony down on the pads of prickly-pear cactus. If you pinch a wad of the white fluff you will find the tips of your fingers stained a brilliant carmine from the insect. Until the discovery of aniline dyes, cochineal was an important source of fast reds and violets. Perhaps the complicated manipulations necessary for success with this dye were beyond the grasp of the more primitive tribes of the Southwest.

But in Mexico at the time of the Conquest, cochineal was extensively used both for dyes and pigments. The pre-

pared insect "nochitztli" formed part of the tribute levied by Mexico upon some of her neighbors. My own experiments with the wild cochineal were only moderately successful since the best colors I could make were shades of pink and old rose. The dye is worth experimenting with if you live where the insect is abundant.

Orange color is rare in woven Indian textiles but not unusual in some Hopi baskets. To make this color the Hopi used the dry flowers of a plant called "Ho-ho-it-si" (*Thelesperma gracile*), first cousin to the coreopsis. The flowers are boiled to make a strongly colored dye and the splints boiled to the right shade without the use of any mordant.



**Alder.** The bark boiled with that of mountain mahogany made the fast reddish browns found on old Navajo blankets.

On cotton the color has to be set with alum. The hue is a red-orange, fast to light and fairly fast to water. In the cases of this dye and the yellow dyes which I will take up next, the coloring principle itself belongs to an interesting series of pigments called the *anthoxanthins*. Some of these—quercitrin from black-oak bark is one—are important dyestuffs which long have been articles of commerce.

In their pure condition the anthoxanthins are only slightly soluble in water but dissolve easily in dilute acid. All plants contain some vegetable acid, so when a decoction of *ho-ho-it-si* is boiled there is enough acid naturally present to dissolve the dyestuff. They also dissolve

in alkaline solutions to make shades of yellow-orange and easily form insoluble compounds with mordants such as alum.

The Hopi have another dye called *c'vapsi*. This is made from the dry flowers of the rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*). The flowers, carefully separated from any green foliage, dye a beautiful lemon yellow. For dyeing wool, a large quantity of dry blossoms are boiled slowly for about four hours. When the color is deep enough the yarns are put in and boiled for fifteen minutes. They are now ready for the mordant, native alum, a common mineral in many parts of the desert. This is a white dry crust-like salt with a sour, puckery taste. Indian dyers carefully heat the alum until



**Rabbitbrush.** A common plant in many parts of Arizona and California. The yellow flowers made the lemon-colored dyes used by the Navajo weavers.

it becomes pasty and then add it to the dye bath while the yarn boils. Soda deepens the color.

Another beautiful yellow from palest canary to deep brass and old gold is furnished by the leaves of the cottonwood (*populus fremontii*) and other species. Apparently this was not used as a textile dye by the Indian weavers but it is one of the best yellows and some of the western tribes used a strong decoction of the young leaves for a yellow and orange dye for arrow feathers. This dye is fast both to light and washing.

Green is a difficult color to make in absence of a good blue which top-dyed with yellow can make any shade. To obtain green the Indians used leaf-green

or chlorophyll, generally from the green parts of the same rabbitbrush that furnished lemon yellow. Chlorophyll is tremendously light-sensitive and usually fades with the slightest excuse. But in some cases leaf-green has lasted for hundreds of years. In one of the many caves explored by Kidder and Guernsey in northeastern Arizona, the inhabitants had built partitions across the cave with leafy oak boughs and after all the centuries between the day they were gathered to the hour of their discovery, the dry oak leaves still clung to the branches green and unfaded. Leaf-green forms permanent, light-resistant compounds with copper salts and it is possible that where leaf-green from some particular



*Sumac, also called "squawbush" is exceptionally rich in tannin and forms an essential ingredient in the black dye of the Navajo.*

plant is recommended as a dye, copper salts are unusually abundant in the plant juice.

Blue, before the Spanish introduced indigo, was little used as a textile dye except for the navy blue shades of the Navajo black dye. However, there was another blue not commonly known. This was from the Hopi blue bean, raised both for a food and for making a light blue to almost black on textile fibers.

The following formula based on the Indian dyes are ones from which I have removed most of the "bugs" and are included for the benefit of readers of Desert Magazine who may want to try their hands at this ancient art.

**BLACK.** Take as many sumac leaves

as will fill a half gallon measure. Bruise in a mortar or run through a food-chopper until well pulped. Cover with half gallon of water and boil for two hours, renewing water as lost by evaporation and strain. To make the second ingredient take equal volumes of powdered pinon gum or ordinary drugstore rosin and natural yellow ocher—the paint store kind will not do. Natural ocher is known in the mineral world as limonite or common rust. Grind the rosin and ocher to a fine flour and mix thoroughly by sifting. Transfer this mixture to an ordinary iron skillet and while stirring continually with an iron rod, heat over a charcoal fire. Avoid flames since burning will spoil the product. At first the mixture will melt,



*Pinon pine. The gum heated with yellow ocher makes the other essential ingredient of the Navajo black.*

bubble and give off puffs of yellowish smoke as it grows darker and darker. After about an hour, the now black mixture will begin to roll up in wads under the stirring rod. As soon as these wads begin to show a rubbery consistency it is time to take it from the fire. The compound will look like black, vesicular lava. Grind this material to a fine powder and add it to the leaf decoction and let it boil. At first the liquid is simply a muddy, brown fluid but as boiling continues a rich, blue-black color develops. To dye wool in this bath immerse the wet yarns and boil until they show a deep black which does not strip in the rinse water. The yarn should remain black after the loose dye is washed off. To dye cotton you need three baths, one of the pre-

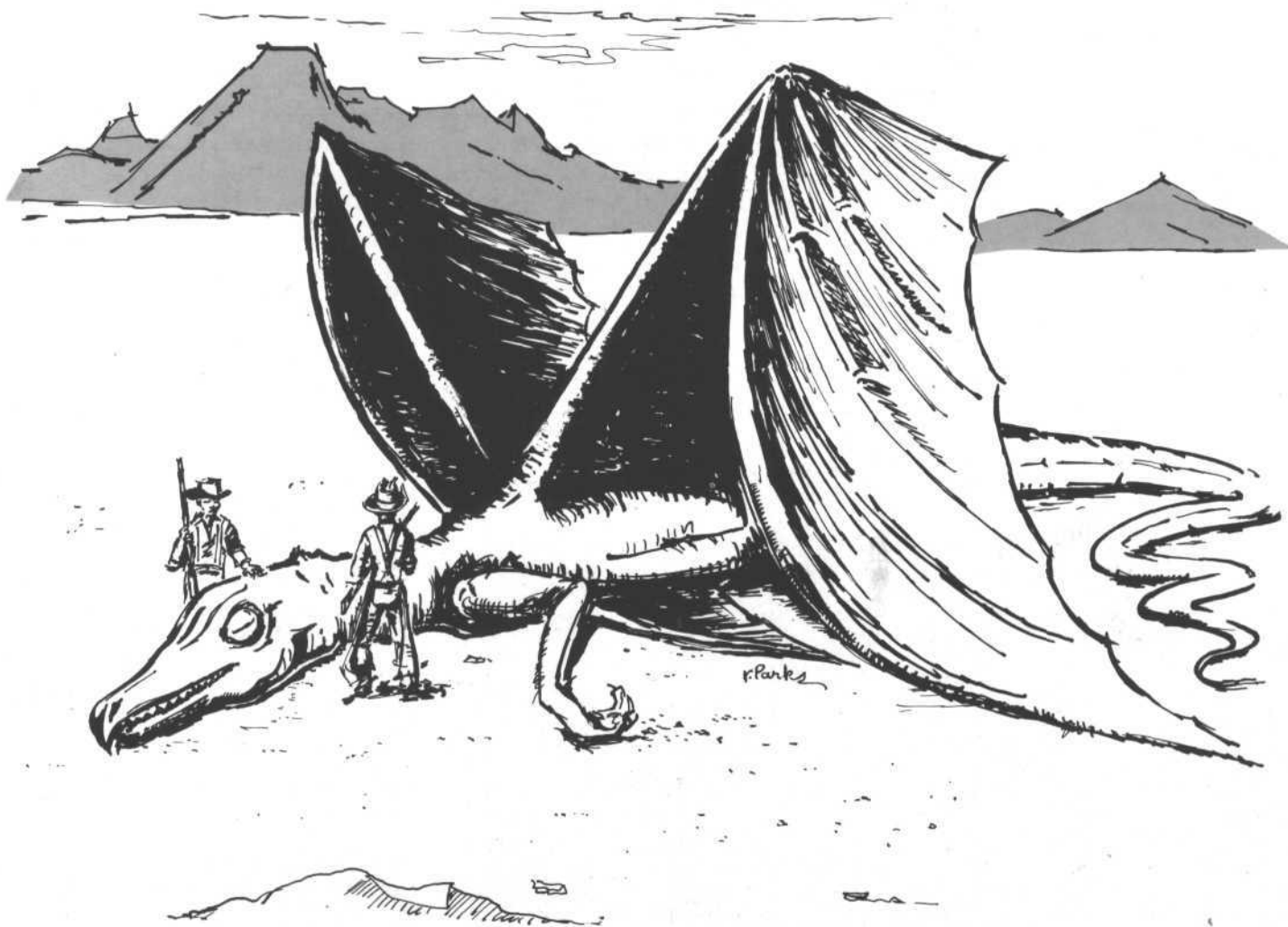
pared leaf solution alone, one of clear limewater and the blue-black bath. Boil the cotton yarns in the sumac bath for an hour. Lift and pass directly into the lime bath and let soak for half an hour. The yarns now will be a deep brown. Let the yarn dry thoroughly, dampen and then boil in the blue-black bath. The result will be a deep slate color.

**RED.** Grind the dry barks of alder and mountain mahogany to a coarse meal. Add two cupfuls of alder and one of mountain mahogany to half a gallon of water in a copper dye pot. Boil for two hours renewing water as lost. Strain and add about one fourth teaspoonful of sodium carbonate (sal soda). The solution will become intensely red. Immerse the yarn and boil to the desired color. The color is fast on wool but weak on cotton.

**YELLOW.** Take a half gallon measureful of fresh, uncrushed leaves of cottonwood. Cover with half gallon of water and boil until the solution becomes a clear, strong yellow. Remove the leaves and boil for ten minutes. Add half a teaspoonful of sodium carbonate and a teaspoonful of powdered alum and immerse the yarn. Boil for half an hour. The yarn will be an intense yellow, fast to soap and water on wool or cotton.

**GREEN.** Grind fresh, green leaves of elder (*Sambucus coerulea*) in a food-chopper until about a quart of pulp has been prepared. Squeeze the juice through muslin into a copper pot or glazed crock. Immerse the yarn in the cold juice and soak for two hours. The yarns will be a deep moss-green which would fade in either light or water. To set this dye, have ready a second bath containing half a teaspoonful of powdered copper sulphate and one cupful of vinegar in a quart of water. Heat this bath to boiling, immerse the yarns and boil for half an hour. Rinse once in cold water and then put through a bath of dilute sodium carbonate (tablespoonful to a quart of cold water) and rinse again. The result will be a lettuce-green fast to light and water.

Experimenting with natural dyes is not time wasted. In some respects they are more satisfactory than many of the artificial dyes, since they fade "true"; that is, they fade to paler shades of the original color. Besides this there is a satisfaction in doing this primeval chemical magic with native materials you gather yourself. □



# Monsters or ?



WHEN Don Pedro Carrillo acquired a grant of several square leagues of land in the vicinity of Laguna del Diablo in 1835 he built a beautiful new home, stocked his ranch with the best horses and cattle and settled down to a life of leisure. Three months later an unexplained fire completely destroyed his house, barns and warehouses, leaving only charred ruins.

"It is a place owned by the devil," he said, leaving the area forever. The rich land lay vacant until squatters settled on it in 1855. They, too, soon moved away, remarking, "The place is haunted."

Some years later a Chico Lopez settled

in the valley near the lake, today called Elizabeth Lake. When one of his vaqueros reported a terrible monster was in the water, Chico and several of his men rushed to the area. They heard a hideous, screeching, hissing roar and could smell the odor of the monster hidden in the tules. Horses were so overcome with terror they bolted.

Safe on a ridge, Chico said he saw a tremendous monster with enormous bat-like wings lashing the water of the lake. By the next morning the monster had disappeared and was not seen again for some time. Then Chico Lopez's horses and cattle began to disappear. At first he blamed the losses on grizzly bears.

One night there was a terrible com-



motion in the corrals. Hideous roars and the shrill screams of terrified horses were heard. Several armed ranch-hands ran to the corral, arriving in time to see the outline of a huge, winged monster disappear into the darkness. Two horses were gone and four injured. Chico Lopez had had enough of the Lake of the Devil and sold out.

In October, 1886 a Los Angeles newspaper carried another account of the monster. The beast was attempting to devour a steer when noises of the struggle attracted a Don Felipe Rivera. Unable to swallow the longhorn, the monster finally gave up and retreated. Felipe ran after the monster as it entered the lake and emptied his .44 caliber Colt into its hide. The striking bullets sounded as if they were hitting a heavy iron kettle.

He described the monster as being about 45 feet long and as large as an elephant. Its head resembled a huge bulldog and it appeared to have six legs with two large leathery wings folded on his back.

Some weeks later several local citizens observed it emerging from the lake and flying to the east. It was never seen again in that area and is believed to have been the monster killed 800 miles away in Arizona a few years later.

In the summer of 1890, two cowboys rode into Tombstone, Arizona and bought implements to skin a creature of huge proportions. They swore they had killed a flying monster in the desert country between Whetstone and the Huachuca Mountains. The creature they described greatly resembled the extinct pterodactyl, but was many times larger. They claimed it had a wing span of 150 feet, an eel-like body 92 feet long and 4 1/2 feet in diameter, and its two feet protruded from the body in front of the wings. The beak was eight feet long, the jaws armed with rows of enormous, sharp teeth. The great protruding eyes were as large as dinner plates. Its wings were of a thick, transparent membrane with no feathers, hair or scales.

When the cowboys first saw the fantastic creature it was apparently exhausted from a long flight and could only fly a short distance at a time, being forced to rest after each flight. Mounted on horseback and armed with rifles the men chased the monster for several miles

wounding it a number of times. Though it frequently ceased running and attacked them several times it was so ponderous, awkward, and exhausted that they evaded it easily. Eventually the rifle slugs took their toll and the creature collapsed and died.

This incident was carried in an 1890 issue of *The Epitaph*, Tombstone, Arizona stating: "The men cut off a small portion of the tip of one wing and took it home with them. Last night one of them arrived in this city for supplies and to make preparations to skin the creature. The hide will be sent to eminent scientists for examination. The finders returned to the kill early this morning, accompanied by several prominent men who will endeavor to bring the strange creature to town before it is mutilated."

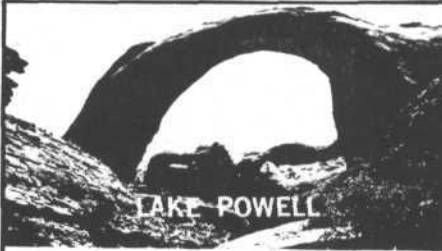
No record that any of this was accomplished can be found. What really did happen? Was the monster left to rot in the hot desert? Could there actually have been such a flying monster? Were the cowboys just spinning a tall tale? No one knows.

Almost as fantastic is the tale of the Walker Lake Serpent. This monster has been seen by numerous individuals and is assumed to live in an underwater cave near the rocky cliffs of the western shore of the lake. Two men have been close enough to photograph the creature. One of the men still lives in Hawthorne, Nevada at the lake's edge. One of the photographs was published in a Reno paper.

Strangely enough the description of this monster tallies exactly with that of the ichthyosaur fossils that have been uncovered 100 miles to the east of Walker

Lake. These fierce prehistoric beasts ruled the great inland seas when they covered much of Nevada and the ocean rolled its waves on what is now its western borders. The graveyard of these great beasts is now a state park.

Who is able to prove definitely that the Thunderbird, Phoenix, the Great Bear, the Great Serpent, and other terrible monsters revealed in Indian legends did not actually exist? Perhaps these monsters of the West did come from Indian legend; perhaps from knowledge of the huge ichthyosaurs, extinct and turned to stone millions of years ago; perhaps they are real, a throwback of Nature from prehistoric times; who can say he really knows? □



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# Spanish Treasure of the Uintahs

by Gale R. Rhoades



**L**URING the mid-1800s the Ute Indians roamed the Uintah Basin area and its Utah mountains at will without much interference from their neighboring tribes or the invading white settlers. There they lived, hunted, and died as one generation passed to the next.

Then, early one summer when the snows were barely gone, the Utes were alarmed to hear that several of their braves, while on a hunting party, had encountered a large group of Spaniards riding towards the rich gold deposits of the Uintah Mountains. The Indians had reason for concern; their grandfathers had rebelled against the Spanish gold-seekers almost a century before when the Spaniards held the Utes captive and forced them to work the mines as slaves. To prevent this happening again, the leaders selected several braves to spy upon the Spanish intruders.

At a safe distance, the Indian patrol kept a vigilant watch as the Spaniards led their cavalcade from the south to the Green River, then up its eastern bank to a spot where it could be forded (most

likely, the old Indian ford near Jensen, Utah). The Spaniards then followed the course of the Duchesne River and past the present site of Duchesne, Utah. At some point on that river the Spaniards veered off to the right and rode through Mountain Sheep Hollow to a place called Pigeon Water. There they made camp for the night near a spring. Early the next morning they loaded their pack animals and headed northwest, slowly riding through each bend of the then unnamed long and narrow mountainous pass to a location where they definitely had been headed. They were in the area of an old gold mine, perhaps the richest in the world. All during this time the Indians spied on the gold seekers.

The Spaniards began their mining operations and, after several days, caught their first glimpse of the spying Indians. The Spaniards made no attempt to capture the Utes or to harm them, and, in view of this, some of the Indians eventually became friends of the Spanish miners. For a time the Indian and the Spaniard accepted each others company without too much fear from either side, but things soon changed.

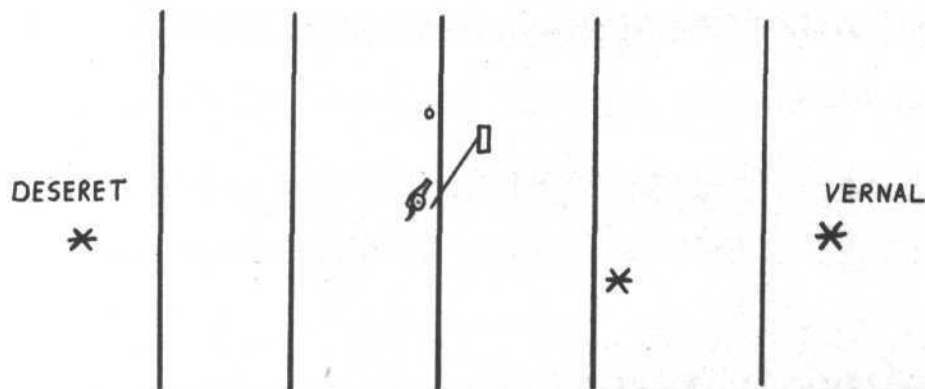
During their peaceful co-existence the

Spaniards extracted much gold from the old mine, hauled it to Mexico, and returned without serious incidents with the Ute Tribe. However, the Spaniards had brought with them many ornaments, brightly colored scarfs, shawls, jewelry, and the like with which to befriend the Indians. These rare treasures were in great demand by the squaws of the Ute tribe and, because they were, many a squaw went to live with the Spanish miners. At this, the bucks of the tribe began driving off the Spaniard's mules and trouble started. Friendships ceased and hatred grew.

The Spaniards decided to leave the mine and return to Mexico until things cooled off. With their mules heavily laden with sacks of gold nuggets, they packed their equipment and slowly started down the high mountain. At the same time, the chiefs and warriors of the tribe held a council for war. Although the Spaniards were outnumbered by the Utes four to one, the Indians left nothing to chance. They planned to ambush the entire company of Spaniards.

As the Spaniards slowly made their way down the mountain the Indians formed a human corral throughout the rocks and the trees and in the bottom of the deep canyon several miles below the weary Spaniards. There they quietly awaited the kill. The ambush began shortly after dawn and by late afternoon the battle was over. The victors swarmed in on the dead and the wounded and with knives and tomahawks, scalped their victims and ravaged their equipment.

The Utes dug a pit to bury the sacks of gold nuggets. The pit was about the size of a wagon box and about five to six feet deep. When all the gold had been placed in the pit they ripped cedar-bark from the nearby trees and covered the cache. Over this they threw rocks and dirt until the pit was filled and then they leveled the earth. They started a fire which swept the hillside, burning



*Copy of old Spanish map showing location of mine and buried cache. Cannon points up canyon towards cache. Map also shows an unnamed town.*



*Author on Cabin Creek, not far from spot where he discovered a Spanish gold pan*

grass, trees, and bodies. Where the huge pine and cedar once adorned the mountainside only sagebrush now grows. Human bones not consumed by the raging flames have long since crumbled away or have been carried off by coyotes or mountain lions.

The massacre of the Spanish gold miners has been told on several occasions by the older members of Utah's Ute Indians. Other incidents have occurred which corroborate the story.

Sometime during the late 1930s a very old Mexican entered the Uintah Basin where he said he had been a member of the Spanish gold miners. After relating, in substance, what has previously been told, he described the massacre.

"As we reached that deep defile, we were attacked by Indians. Soon we were hemmed in on all sides. For every one we killed, two or three seemed to come from somewhere and take his place. We fought for our lives. After several hours, I could see our fate was sealed. I crawled up under the low and dropping branches of a juniper and lay there until nightfall.

"From my hiding place I saw the Indians massacre the last of our men. I heard the dying beg for mercy only to be mocked by the blood-thirsty savages. Many a wounded, helpless Spaniard had his scalp haggled off and then allowed to lie and slowly die in the parching sun, while the fiends reveled in the moans of the dying.

"I saw the victors dig a pit and then pile the bags of gold nuggets into it and cover the same with bark, rocks, and dirt. It was a little ravine near a dense clump of trees . . . I don't see anything like that now.

"When darkness came, for some distance I crawled on my hands and knees towards the creek. In the day time I would hide and rest. Night after night I felt my way through the darkness towards the south. I all but starved to death. After thus spending many days and nights, I joined up with a family of white people, and for several years lived with them—learned their language."

There also have been reports of Indians having gold nuggets, allegedly taken from the Spanish cache.

A young, white homesteader and his old Indian neighbor were visiting one day when the older man pulled out of his pocket a handful of gold nuggets the size of beans. When asked where he had obtained them, the Indian pointed toward the mountains and said, "I make little hole—hole down in bark." He refused to take the young man to the area, nor would he elaborate on the location.

Mr. Murphy, one-time store owner and former president of the Moon Lake Stake, said once an elderly buck came to his store. After getting supplies on credit, the Indian said he would return and pay later.

"In about ten days or two weeks he

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came back and without speaking, sat around until everyone was gone. Then he began pulling at a buckskin thong, the one end of which was fastened to his belt, the other end tied to a small buckskin sack which he kept concealed inside his overalls. He emptied the contents upon the counter; nuggets, gold nuggets, a big handful of them! Some as large as the first joint of my finger." Again, although he stated the location was in the Uintah Mountains, he would only smile when asked for more details.

Today, the mountains show evidence of the Spaniards having once been there. They left their treasure symbols engraved deep on rocks and trees; they abandoned several of their heavy cannons in their speedy departure, and they left their sturdy log cabins and livestock corrals behind to rot under many years of heavy snows. Other discoveries made by prospectors and range riders add new substance to the age-old mystery: several burro hoofs and a Spaniard's skull were unearthed near a creek many years ago; an old Indian discovered a small brass mule bell which had the inscriptions, "1878—SAICNELEGIER, CHIANTEL, FONDEUR"—the bell also had two Spanish crosses on it. This author also discovered an old handmade gold pan of Spanish origin near Cabin Creek, another section of the Uintahs.

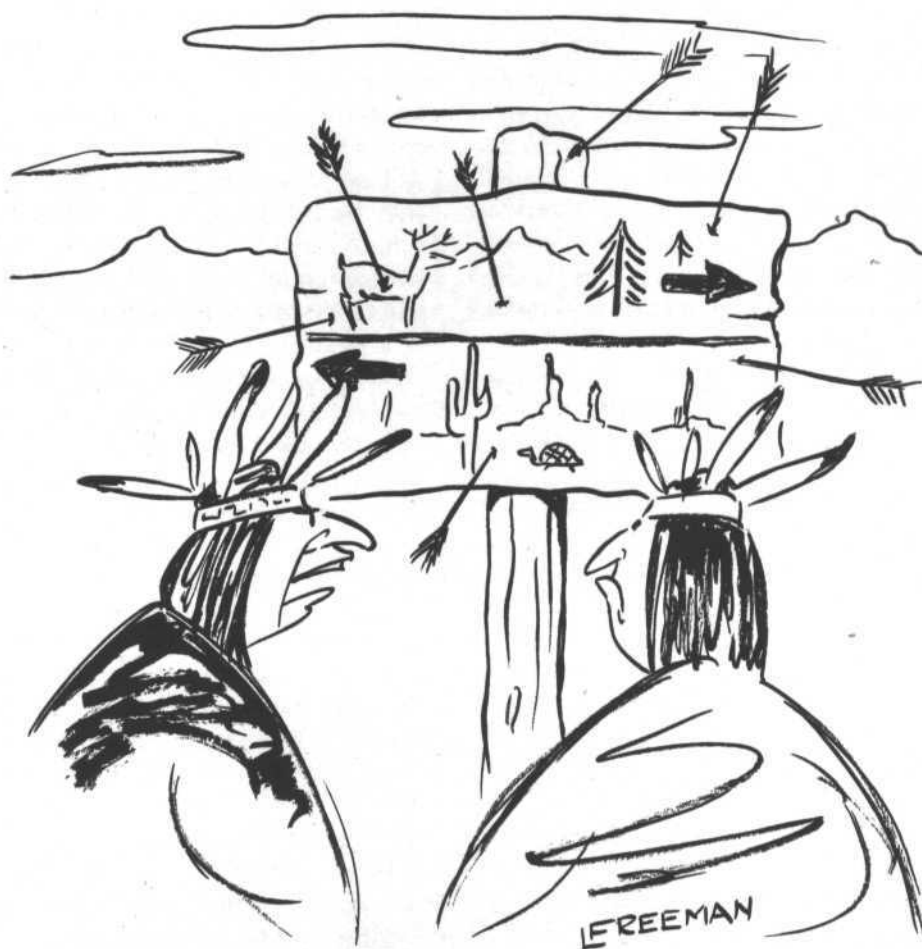
Someday a lucky soul will hit it rich; whether it be from the buried cache of gold or from one of the rich gold mines that still lie hidden in the silence of the Uintah Mountains. □

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*Old mine entrance just off the Rock Creek Road near the Lower Still Waters of Rock Creek, and near the area of the Spanish massacre.*



*"Vandals!"*

# Strictly from a Woman's Viewpoint

## It's a Dog's Life -- or How to Get Unstickered

If a fellow five months of age can get into this woman's column, I'd like to tell you about the way the widow I own solved a desert problem. We are desert people. I like it, but sometimes I get cactus stickers in my paws and they hurt. Renee ties my leash snugly to the car bumper, turns her back to it and stretches my leg away from me. She has to be careful that I don't bite her because of the pain. She understands my actions and doesn't scold. This is about the only way a single lady can help her dog. See how calm I look after the stickers are out of my paw?

Signed: "Ben-Shahn"



### BEEF JERKY

Cut round steak into thin strips. Cut with the grain. Dip strips briefly in hot brine—a quarter of a cup of salt to a gallon of water. Immerse only until meat is no longer red. Drain well. Have a mixture of salt and coarse ground black pepper ready. (Some people omit the brine dipping and proceed directly to this step.) Coat well on both sides. Hang strips from a limb of a tree or lay them on a wire screen elevated from the ground. It is important that the sun and air reach them. If screen method is used, turn strips after a day or two. The U.S. Department of Agriculture says that strips may be covered with a single layer of cheese cloth if you are worried about flies.

The resultant product is chewy but not tough. Both savory and highly nutritious, it retains almost all the value of fresh meat. The heat of a summer day will not spoil it if you keep it dry until you are ready to eat it.

## Modoc Indian Wars

*Continued from Page 9*

swing. The lava beds became the setting for the battle between the Army and a small band of Modocs.

Captain Jack's stronghold, a huge cluster of rocks, provided a natural fortress for the Indians. The Army called for heavy artillery, hoping to shorten the battle. Before it arrived, the soldiers tried to take the bastion by storm. However, with bullets flying from everywhere, the winter fog and the jagged, unfamiliar terrain against them, the Army was repelled suffering 50 casualties. The Indians had none.

When it seemed that force wasn't going to accomplish anything, the government offered Captain Jack amnesty. A peace parley was scheduled to take place near the stronghold. General E. R. S. Canby represented the Army. Jack considered accepting the amnesty but his braves, distrusting the soldiers, persuaded him to keep fighting. The scheduled meeting took place but before anything was accomplished, Jack shot and killed General Canby in cold blood. A historical

marker stands today where Canby was shot.

The Indians returned to the stronghold. The Army sent for more men and with the additional troops, plus the long awaited artillery, they attacked the stronghold. Surrounding the Indians on all sides, 1000 soldiers closed in. Jack and his braves had abandoned the fortress during the night, hiding in the Merrill Ice Cave. There they stayed without food and with only the water from the river in the cave. When the water was gone, they tried to escape. Jack got away but the others were caught. Jack later gave himself up saying, "Jack's legs gave out." He was taken into custody, transferred to Fort Klamath, Oregon and executed by hanging, thus ending the Modoc reign of terror. Ironically, the execution took place in the reservation where Jack would have lived if he hadn't decided to go to Lost River.

The story of the stronghold war is told in the rocks themselves by markers placed throughout and relating various stages of the battle. Going through this stone fortress, it's easy to see why 60 Modocs were able to hold off the Army troops.

While the most decisive battle of the war was fought in the stronghold, the war itself had been fought over most of the Siskiyou and Modoc county land areas. From Fandango Pass near the Nevada state line to the lava beds near Tule Lake, there were bloody massacres and battles. These were commonplace during the pre-stronghold fight.

Since the Indian War, the area has turned toward more peaceful activities. The town of Tule Lake is the hub of a rich farm area and has its own particular kind of small town charm. If you have no camping gear, accommodations are available at Tule Lake or Canby. Otherwise, camping facilities, though at a minimum, are available near the Monument headquarters. Medicine Lake, a few miles south, offers excellent camping, fishing and boating opportunities.

What's your pleasure? Outdoor sports activities at Medicine Lake or geology, history and sightseeing at the lava beds. They're all available in Modoc and Siskiyou counties where the Stronghold and the Lava Beds National Monument stand ready to tell you of their roles in the history of the west. □



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# Ione, Nevada

BY LAMBERT FLORIN

A monthly feature by the author of *Ghost Town Album*, *Ghost Town Trails*,  
*Ghost Town Shadows*, *Ghost Town Treasures* and *Boot Hill*



ONE is not only a classic name, it is also a classic example of boom and bust. Founded in 1863 by P. A. Haven, Ione existed for

three riotous and robust years as a county seat of Nevada. And it was only through a bit of political skulduggery it became a county seat.

Located 30 miles from Austin in the rugged mountains of Nevada, the settlement was first called Haven's or Shoshone. Then some erudite miners named it Ione for the heroine of Bulwer Lytton's novel, *The Last Days of Pompeii*.

Before its first anniversary Ione was clamoring to become the county seat. The authorities, impressed with the growth of the isolated camp, were agreeable to the idea; their only objection being that there was no county for Ione to be the seat of. The problem was solved by the legislators in February, 1864. They severed a nearly square section from the counties of Lander and Esmeralda, named the several hundred thousand acre chunk of sagebrush and pinyon pines, Nye County. Then the seat was placed in Ione and everyone was pleased. Especially happy was Governor Nye who had engineered the whole thing.

At about this time Ione became the home of an infant newspaper, the *Nye County News*. A nearly complete file of the four-sheeter is kept at Tonopah

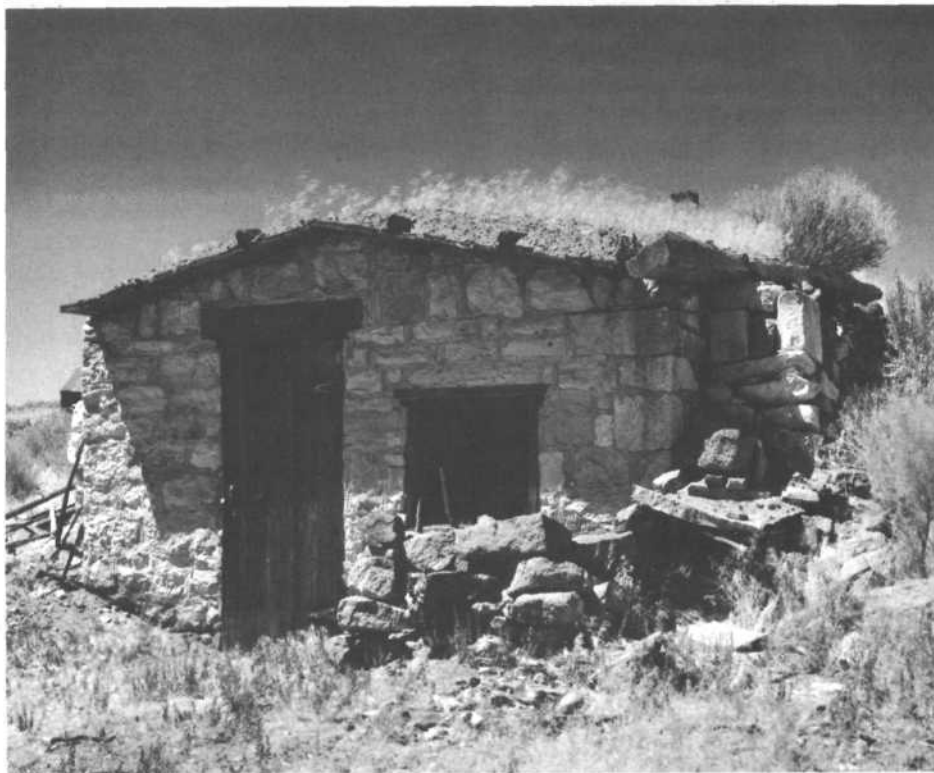
and is a treasury of daily doings in the Ione of that day.

Every new business venture was wholeheartedly endorsed and freely advertised. If the editor wasn't paid in cash he always received something in trade. His larder was kept stocked by the grocery store he extolled, and the week after he inserted a flattering item about the town's Men's Haberdashery, he blossomed out in a new hat.

Reports of funerals in the town were always given full treatment, especially if the deceased had been a citizen of prominence. The long and detailed story concerning the funeral of the town's only physician ended with "when these ceremonies were concluded, the cold and cruel clods rattled harshly upon the casket and all that remains of a noble-hearted citizen, affectionate father and husband and a true friend was forever shut out from human vision and left to darkness."

When there was insufficient actual news to fill the pages the resourceful editor dipped into his stock of fillers, once coming up with "An Ione father who has passed incalculable nights has immortalized himself by discovering a method of keeping babies quiet. The modus operandi is as follows: set it up, propped by pillows if it cannot set alone and smear its fingers liberally with thick molasses. Then put a dozen feathers into its hands. It will continue to pick the

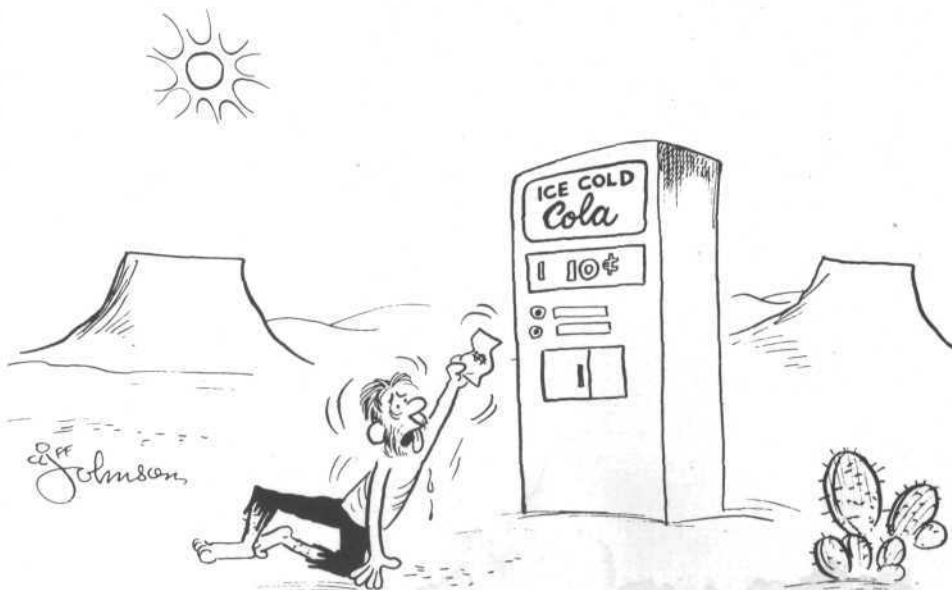




feathers from one hand to another until it falls asleep. As soon as it awakens, more molasses and more feathers. In place of the nerve racking yells there will be silence and joy unspeakable."

Any infants actually thus pacified had not reached their third birthdays when the county seat went to the upstart and now more flourishing Belmont. The event signaled a steady decline for Ione, though the camp never became completely deserted. There have been periods of

activity on a limited scale, population varying from two or three to thirty or so. Many old structures remain from the earliest days when building material was limited to that on hand. Our illustration shows one that could well have been the assay office touted in the *Nye County News*. Solidly constructed of stone, the roof is covered with clay and gravel. There, each brief, damp spring, a crop of grass burgeons hopefully, only to sear and turn yellow when rain ceases. □



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# BACK COUNTRY

## FOURWHEEL CHATTER

by Bill Bryan

The phonograph record we have all been waiting for has been released and is on the market. The *JEEP DRIVING MAN* by Jack and Sweet Ginger Nunnally has made it big, and believe me is going even bigger. If you have not had the opportunity to hear them sing this really true to life song about Jeepers all you have to do is send \$1.25 to Jack and Ginger at 14445 Domart Ave., Norwalk, California and request your autographed copy. Don't delay, do it today.

We didn't have the chance to attend the Phoenix Jeep Club Jamboree, but from what our club members tell us, we missed a ball. Congratulations, Phoenix, for sending home so many happy people looking forward to your next Jamboree.

We worked the 14th annual Indio Cruise, and brother what a turn out! I never did hear the exact figures other than 525 people enjoyed a pit barbecue. By the size of the camp there must have been at least 350 to 375 four-wheel-drives there; then toss in one camper, tent or house car and you have

got a real crowd. Cruise Chairman Dick Orson and his secretary, Carol Hunt, did a tremendous job, along with the other club members. I helped people past checkpoint number one, which was the first rough hill out of camp. Passing by us we saw Hal and Niki Higgins, Lyle and Tillie Fransway and Merrit and Ruth Ladberry, Bill and Betty Bedwell, Frank Robinson, the Loyd Seese family and a whole bunch more from the Chuckwalla Jeep Club. We talked with members from the Geckos, Wanders, Los Paisanos, Los Arrieols, Blythe Jeep Club, Cap Randel from the Orange County Four Wheelers, Dick and Claudia Myers from the Drifters, Gene Morris, President of the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs, the Ocean-side Four Wheelers. The Wandering Wheels, the Inland Empire Ridge Rangers, Bud Jackson from the Hemet Jeep Club, Don McPherson from the Riverside Hill N Gully Riders, Dick Cepek and company, Larry Hoffman, publisher of the 4 x 4 and Dune Buggy News,

Tierra Del Sol, and so many more. Almost last in line were Jack and Ginger Nunnally. The TV people wanted a picture of them climbing our hill, so what happens, they popped a rear axle. They drove back to camp with Dick Myers and me tailing behind. At camp we removed the Mercury axle and found the splines stripped off on the inside one quarter inch, which is the part into the power lock. Dick Myers does not have power lock so why not exchange with him, which we did and got Jack running again.

Chester Scott led the station wagon run. This was a 26 mile scenic tour attended by about 60 station wagons, pickups and novice drivers.

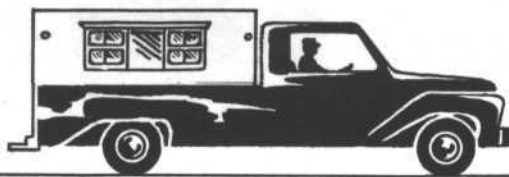
☆ ☆ ☆

The Napa Valley Jeepers hosted the northern area meeting of the California Association of Jeep Clubs on April 2nd, 1968. There were 15 of the 19 northern area clubs present, which is a very good showing. The club president for 1968 is Lou Havens and their state delegate is Paul Donovan, Jr.



*As reported by Bill Bryan, the 14th Annual Indio Cruise was a great success and enjoyed by families throughout Southern California. Left to right, Cruise Chairman Dick Orson keeps an eye on the barbeque service; Doug Reeder and Herb and Jane Halling, from the Desert Foxes, check out a rough spot; Jack and Sweet Ginger Nunnally entertain around the fire.*

# TRAVEL



## A CODE FOR ALL

*As pointed out each month in DESERT'S Back Country Travel, organized recreational groups conduct projects to collect litter left by spoilers. If these litter bugs would adhere to the following Code (we often wonder if they dump their trash in their own backyard), life in the wilderness areas of the West would be cleaner and more enjoyable for all of us.*

### THE FOUR WHEELER'S CODE

As members of the American public who operate four wheel drive vehicles to enjoy the awe-inspiring scenery of our mountains, valleys, deserts, forests, marshes and meadows, and all the other back country areas of the nation, we will:

Leave the land and its vegetation as we find it. Help preserve plant life and soil by limiting travel to established roads and trails. Avoid cutting switch backs and driving through moist meadows which will leave permanent scars.

Protect the history of the nation by not disturbing old mining camps, ghost towns, diggings, or other historic or natural values.

Respect the rights and property of other user groups such as miners, ranchers, fishermen, hunters and other recreationists.

Conduct all trips in a safe-sane manner.

Accept the responsibility of keeping the back country beautiful by packing out litter.

Give everyone we meet the courtesy of the road as safety and courtesy are contagious.

Observe the local history, the geology of the land and the ecology of the vegetation so that we may more fully appreciate the splendor of our national heritage.

## Students Win Conservation Award

Students of the Cupertino (California) Junior High School will receive this month's DESERT Conservation and Preservation Award for their activities in planting trees in the Big Basin Redwood State Park.

In cooperation with the Sierra Club and the State Department of Parks and Recreation, the first group of 48 students transplanted grasses and small plants, dug a water-pipe ditch and installed fence posts. Despite rain, cold and snow, the students refused to leave

before they completed their project. Later, another group assisted in planting 2000 Douglas Fir seedlings.

"It's too bad that news about the enthusiasm and interest of these kids does not rate front page headlines like other activities we always read about," commented Dennis Daggett, faculty and Sierra Club member.

He said that as a result of the project, others will be selected and completed.

## Calendar of Western Events

*Information on Western Events must be received at DESERT six weeks prior to scheduled date.*

JULY 1-2, ANTIQUE SHOW, Monterey County Fairgrounds, Monterey, Calif. Sponsored by St. Mary's By-The-Sea Episcopal Church of Pacific Grove.

JULY 4-6, ALL-INDIAN POW WOW, Flagstaff, Arizona. Thousands of Indians from a score of tribes set up camp, barter, stage dances, etc., during this world-famous event. Parades, rodeos, ceremonial dances.

JULY 4-7, LOS ANGELES CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY'S annual show. Los Angeles County Arboretum, 309 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia. Admission free.

JULY 4-7, SANTA MARIA 4 WHEELERS JAMBOREE, Oceano Sand Dunes, Pismo Beach. Everyone invited. Write Santa Maria 4 Wheelers, P. O. Box 1386, Santa Maria, Calif. 93454.

JULY 6 & 7, NEVADA GEM AND MINERAL SHOW, Centennial Coliseum, Reno, Nevada. Lapidary dealers, demonstrations, displays, cuttings, etc. Other western states participating. Write Reno Gem & Mineral Society, P. O. Box 2004, Reno, Nevada.

JULY 11-14, NATIONAL FOUR WHEEL DRIVE ASSN. CONVENTION, Denver, Colorado. Write NFWDA, 5805 West 1st, Denver, Colo. 80226.

JULY 15-19, MILE HI JEEP CLUB MEET. Denver, Colorado.

JULY 20 & 21, ACI CINDER RALLY, Flagstaff, Arizona. Write ACI, Box 9295, Phoenix, Arizona.

JULY 27 & 28, GEORGETOWN JEEPERS JAMBOREE, Georgetown, Calif. No children under 14. Write Jeepers Jamboree, Box 308, Georgetown, Calif. 95634.

Desert Magazine each month will recognize either an individual or members of an organization who have contributed toward the preservation or conservation of our wilderness areas. We hope by presenting this award it will teach vandals and litterbugs to change their habits and enjoy and not destroy our natural resources. Please send your nominations for an individual or organization and a description of the project to Back Country Travel, Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260.



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LOST DESERT GOLD, legendary and geological history of the southern California desert, with photos and maps to pinpoint locations. \$2.50 postpaid. Gedco Publishing Co., Box 67, Bellflower, Calif. 90706.

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"ASSAULT ON BAJA," E. Washburn, 3934 Cortland, Lynwood, Calif. \$2.00 tax included, "zest of discovery" writes Belden; "wide-eyed experience" says Powell USC.

FRANK FISH—Treasure Hunter—said Gold is where you find it. His book "Buried Treasure & Lost Mines" tells how and where to look, 93 locations, photos and maps. 19x24 colored map pinpointing book locations. Book \$1.50. Map \$1.50. Special: both \$2.50 postpaid. Publisher, Erie Schaefer, 14728 Peyton Drive, Chino, Calif. 91710.

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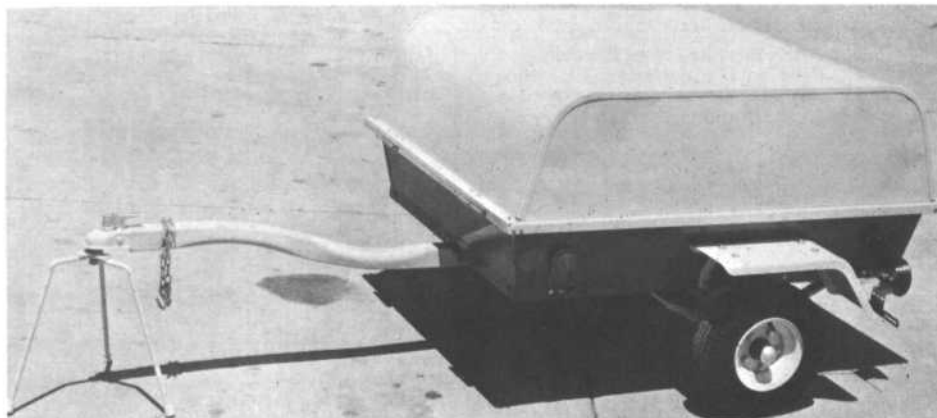
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## COMPACT UTILITY TRAILER

If you're looking for a small, light-weight trailer to tote your extra rock specimens, camping equipment, or vacation gear, here's one that fills the bill. It's an extremely attractive little unit that's just over 100-inches long, with a rugged steel box 43½" wide, 55" long, and 8" deep. It's equipped with 4.00x8" tires, safety chains, and legal lights, of course. (Stop-light, turn-signals, tail-lights.) The price is \$186.30, and for \$64.75 extra you can have an all-steel top added to it that nearly doubles the volume. Rated at 1000 pounds capacity, with a 1⅞" coupler, the Golden Rod Utility Trailer is painted sand-beige. From Dutton-Lainson Co., Hastings, Nebraska 68901.



## SAVE YOUR BREATH!

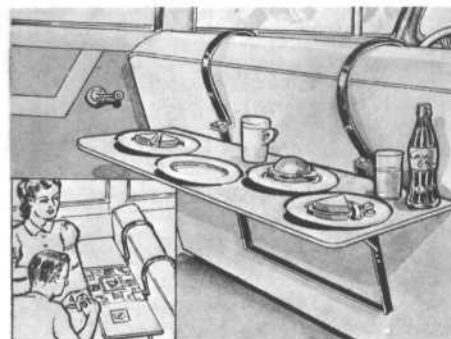
Why pump up an air-mattress the old way if you can do it with your feet? It's possible with the new foot-operated Bellows Pump. The big 2-½-quart chamber is said to give it triple air volume of ordinary bellows-pumps. Just keep stepping on the bellows until the air mattress fills. Then detach the rubber hose, and the Bellows Pump folds into a flat 2"x7"x10" size. Construction is of wood top and bottom, rubber sides, and a plastic air valve. The air-hose is 48" long. About \$7.95 from Gloy's Inc., 11 Addison St., Larchmont, N.Y. 10538.

## PORTABLE SINK

Now they've designed an all-plastic sink which also houses its own 5-gallon water supply. They call it the Campteen. Just operate the manual galley pump built on the unit and water gushes up out of the reservoir into the top-side sink. It's 21"x16"x7" in size, and it has a separate drain for sink water. A cool blue in color, the Campteen ought to fill the bill for campers, fishermen, or anyone headed into a camp without any facilities. About \$17 including delivery from Continental Products Co., Box 1368, Battle Creek, Mich. 49016.

## NEW TENT STAKES

Something different in tent-stakes is always welcome. Here is a new type made of spring-steel that resembles a coil spring with a pair of legs sticking out. Just press them into the soil by hand—or tap them in with a mallet. These rugged-looking new stakes are made of cadmium-plated spring steel, with no sharp edges. The 11½" stakes are 40 cents each, the 13" stakes are about 75 cents each, from Simcoe Products, 54 Pine Grove Street, Springfield, Mass. 01119.



## KAR TABLE

Want to keep the kids occupied during the long vacation drives? Now there is a snack bar and game table that fits over the front seat, giving them a desk, or can be used as a lunch snack bar. The 12"x30" table is sturdy and fits snugly with no sway or tilting. When not in use folds into compact flat for storage. Cost is \$5.95, plus tax, at G-W Sales, 1717 Gisler Ave., Costa Mesa, Calif. 92626.



# Letters and Answers

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope.

## Elusive Tithes . . .

The article by Lambert Florin regarding role Mormons played in our gold rush drama, reminded me of the duel of wits between Brigham Young and Sam Brannan, which rocked mining camps for many a day. Boys of the famed Mormon Battalion were innocent pawns in the battle of words in which Brannan vanquished Brigham.

The Mormon Battalion had just completed its march to California and was en route to Utah via Sacramento. Sam Brannan, a Mormon bishop, had come to San Francisco by sailing ship the year before. He met the Mormon boys at Sacramento and persuaded them to dig for gold in the newly discovered fields for a while before going back to Utah. Following his suggestion Mormon Bar resulted, where many of the boys struck it rich.

Before they went to work Sam reminded them, "You will, of course, remember your tithe of 10 percent to the Lord. I will receive it here. Don't forget!" The boys were industrious, and they didn't forget. The Lord's share grew into quite a pile at Brannan's lodgings, and also they went back to Utah with fat pokes. Brigham Young met them and inquired about their tithes. In respectful tones they said they had paid it to Bishop Brannan at Sacramento.

A trusted horseman soon pounded the dusty trail to Sacramento a 1000 miles westward, with a letter addressed to Sam Brannan. It read something like this—"Our boys got home with a deal of gold. They said they left the Lord's share with you. Kindly deliver same to bearer of this note, and oblige, etc., etc."

While the weary horseman beat the dust out of his shirt with his sombrero, Sam hastily scratched out a note and, putting it in an empty saddlebag, started the horseman back to Utah. The note read, "Yes, I have the Lord's due in my possession. I have been looking for him since last spring. I will deliver the sizeable pile of tithes the boys left when he shows up, and signs a receipt for same. With best wishes for your good health, I am your humble fellow saint, Sam Brannan."

LEE STROBEL,  
Glendale, Calif.

*Editor's Note: This probably did not happen, with all due respect to the Church of the Latter Day Saints, but it's too good a yarn to pass up.*

## Not So . . .

In regards to Mrs. Poole's letter in the June '68 issue on Trigger Happy Cowboys, we would like to ask her why she did not call this to the attention of the Sheriff's Department? There is always a deputy in that area, and I am sure he would be glad to talk to the Pooles and discourage careless shooting. Several of us go there often and we have never seen any trigger happy cowboys."

RICHARD INGEMAN,  
National Rifle Assn. member  
Costa Mesa, Calif.

## Diablo Canyon Souvenir . . .

Enclosed is what appears to be a linotype slug bearing the inscription "Arles Adams, Bill Sherrill, Randall Henderson, Oct. 1954," which I picked up in Canyon del Diablo last March when on my second ascent of Picacho del Diablo in Baja California. It was lying on the ground at either the 4050 or the 4450 elevation, I have forgotten which. It was an instant and graphic reminder of the early Diablo literature as published in *Desert Magazine* and *Summit*.

PETE OVERMIRE,  
Orinda, California.

*Editor's Note: Randall tells us that the slug was left in Canyon del Diablo when he and his two companions, starting from the Meling ranch on the coastal side of the San Pedro Martyr mountains, made a 3-day backpack traverse of the Diablo gorge to the San Felipe desert in 1954. The story of their adventure was published in the August, 1955 issue of Desert Magazine. During those years when he was climbing mountains and exploring the desert he generally carried linotype slugs to be deposited in cairns along the way as permanent records of the expedition.*

## Litter Way to Reduce . . .

Whenever the wife and I take a hike along a trail or through a campground, we always carry a large paper sack. If we take the same route out and back, we pick up all the cans, bottles and bits of paper on the way back. If we take a loop hike and don't return by the same route, we pick up the trash along the way and dump it in a trash can at the end of the hike.

Since starting this task last year, I have lost 20 pounds and feel great, not only from the exercise I get but also from seeing the clean trails and campsites we are able to achieve with such little effort. Hope some of your readers will like the idea and join in.

GLEN A. GILLILAND,  
National City, Calif.

## Dig at Calico . . .

I recently read that someone who claims he owns the mining rights at the Calico archeological diggings near Barstow, California has told the San Bernardino Museum to get off or come up with \$25,000,000. I also understand the diggings will reveal important facts soon.

EDWINA SHEPPARD,  
Pasadena, Calif.

*Editor's Note: As a result of Mr. Glen S. Gunn's demand the entire archeological world is up in arms, especially considering the amount of money asked. The site will reveal important archeological finds. An article on the Calico Site by L. Burr Belden, noted historian, will appear in either the August or September issue of DESERT.*

## Challenges Peralta Theory . . .

I am very much surprised that "Mr. Pegleg" has changed to the Peralta theory of the origin of the black nuggets to coincide with his find of Spanish artifacts. Also, it seems odd to me that no one else, as yet, has questioned his new theory in view of the evidence he himself has submitted to the contrary.

He has stated that the nuggets were found not only on top of the hill, but also within it to a depth of at least 3 1/2 feet, with the largest and heaviest being found at the greater depths.

In my way of thinking, a hill suffers much erosion from the elements and the tendency is toward a constant reduction in size. As a result of the erosion, the soil and lighter materials will be washed or blown away leaving any buried gold or heavy materials exposed on the surface. If nuggets were deposited on a hill, the tendency would be for them to remain on or near the surface for the very same reason.

Now, if the nuggets were deposited in a basin or low area the opposite would occur. They would be covered by material eroded from the surrounding areas. Standing water would even speed up the process by loosening the soil and allowing the heavy nuggets to settle to greater depths.

All of this indicates to me that since some of the nuggets were found in the hill, and at the depths indicated by the finder, they definitely were not deposited there. The hill and mound quite probably were small portions of an ancient river bed, buried for centuries and then thrust upward by the earth movement so common to the area.

THOMAS F. ODELL,  
Diamond Bar, Calif.

*Editor's Note: In my opinion, Mr. Odell has a very logical point and it is a factor I have pointed out to the many hundreds of readers who have visited DESERT to see the nuggets. His reasoning is why, personally, I cannot accept the Peralta theory—and I have no more information than what has been printed in DESERT since the story broke in the March '65 issue. Maybe "Mr. Pegleg" (see his latest letter on Page 23) would care to comment on Mr. Odell's reasoning. Jack Pepper, Editor.*

## Someone Goofed . . .

I like the idea of your printing larger and more detailed maps, but now that you have that licked, how about putting the right map with the right story?

GENE LANDES,  
Palm Desert, Calif.

*Editor's Note: Reader Landes is referring to the June '68 issue. The maps for the articles, San Bernardino's Fossil Beds and Springtime Visit to Indian Flats were switched. So if you want to go to Indian Flats see map on Page 8 and if you want to go to the Fossil Beds see map on Page 17. We're going to stay home and sit in the dunce's corner.*

